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Chargers Week 4 Media Availability

Thursday, September 29, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR JOE LOMBARDI

On QB Justin Herbert's workload in practice and potential adjustments to the practice plan week:

"He's getting all of the mental reps. When he's able to take a rep, he takes it. If not, [QB] Chase [Daniel] gets in there. It just depends on how he feels. It's a day-to-day thing."

On 'if there is a concern for younger quarterbacks wanting to take reps while injured':

"I think every quarterback wants the reps. They want the preparation. They want the full-speed look at it. Things have to transition to more mental if it's a day where you're not feeling up to running the plays full-speed. It's definitely not ideal, but he's one of those guys that is a hard worker and can put in the mental reps. It's not the way you wish it was going, but I think he's going to be fine."

On Herbert's 'game-time decision' to play on Sunday:

"I probably made it a little murkier than it needed to be. I think he was truly a game-time decision. Pregame, he was like, 'Look, I am good. Don't worry about it.' I probably was a little cautious at first, wanting to see how it was going. I think he was fine. I should have listened and internalized what he was saying and how he was feeling a little bit more."

On developing the passing game:

"I think that if we are a little more efficient in the running game, that will help. It will make it not as hard in the passing game. I think executing on third downs will be a big thing, as well. It hasn't been up to what we are used to. I think getting the running game going a little bit more and getting a little more explosives in the passing game and converting on third down will lead to more points."

On developing the run game:

"I think that in this last game, I didn't call it enough. Some of that was because we were three-and-out, three-and-out, and then a couple of turnovers. Just didn't have the opportunities. Then, pretty soon, we were in a pass-only mode. I think some of it is giving it an opportunity to get going. I think we did a decent job in the first two games. This last game, we did not. Just executing a little bit better."

On the expectations of G/T Jamaree Salyer:

"I think they are pretty high for him. He's another one of these guys we talk about, [T] Rashawn [Slater] and [G] Zion [Johnson]; he's cut from the same cloth. He's mature beyond what you would expect from a guy of his age. He's played left tackle in the SEC. He's blocked the best in that world [in college], which quickly turn into the best in our world. He was blocking those guys all day in practice and facing the competition he did. I know it's not too big for him. I think he's going to handle it just fine."

On Salyer's reps at left tackle during practice:

"A little bit. Obviously, if we had anticipated this, he probably would have gotten a little bit more. He's been in a left-handed stance. He certainly got a lot of reps at left tackle in college, and then a little bit here. He's catching up this week."

On Salyer 'staying on the left side of the line':

"I think it's a good point. I think that helps. He has great instincts for his position, offensive line in general. He really is a really good football player. He's got good feel. He's smart. Just everything that kind of calms you down as a coach, knowing that this guy is going to know how to survive at worst case where he's at because of his intelligence and knowing how everything fits together. I think we're pretty fortunate. I think our scouting department, honestly, did a really good job finding a player of his caliber. We had him rated a lot higher than where we drafted him and fortunate that he came to us. He's been everything we hoped for and more."

On what he 'tells the offense to help them remain positive in light of injuries':

"Watching what the quarterback did last week, I think there is a lot more calm among everybody, knowing that how he's going to respond and how he is going to feel on game day. It was very uncertain last week. We are all professionals, and so as a professional, you have to show up and do your job, regardless of what is happening around you. We know that we have a good roster that is pretty deep. The guys that we are onboarding in the absence of some of these other guys are guys that we trust and can do their job. We still have good players to plug in there and give ourselves a chance."

On if he 'suggested' to Herbert 'to reach out to other quarterbacks who have experienced a similar injury':

"No. I haven't suggested that. That would probably be a good question for him."

On if Herbert is 'more at ease' with his injury:

"I think so. He didn't know what it was going to feel like on gameday. I think he had his mind up he was going to play, but he didn't know what that was going to look like. I think having gone through it, he has more confidence with what this whole process is going to be like. Just around the whole building is just a different feeling, more certainty this week."

On if the uncertainty of Herbert's status 'affected his teammates':

"I'm not sure. We didn't play well, so it could have been a lot of factors that were into that. Certainly, that won't be an excuse this week."

On RB Isaiah Spiller's development:

"He's doing well. Practicing well. He's a guy that if we had him up on gameday, we would feel good about it."

On the wide receiver group and injuries to WRs Keenan Allen and Jalen Guyton early in the season:

"Those are both tough breaks. Keenan [Allen] is a guy that is on the mend. We expect him back soon. I'm not exactly sure when. It might be this week, might be next week. We still have [WR] Mike [Williams]. He's a guy we need to get more involved. We feel great about [WR] Josh [Palmer] and D.C. [WR DeAndre Carter] has been a really good edition for us this year. The other guys are going to have to step up. Between our tight ends, running backs and receivers, we feel like we have enough."

On if he is 'surprised' by Carter's level of involvement in the offense this season:

"Probably. With Keenan's injury, it's been a little bit more than you would have thought. I think we felt really good about him. We, obviously, watched his film in Washington and saw that he was a good player. Our opinion rose as we saw him in training camp and the offseason. I think the injuries forced him into more reps than maybe we anticipated, but we're not surprised at what he is doing."

On if RB Austin Ekeler's 'struggles' could be due to the number of reps:

"I'm not sure. I think he had a similar workload per game last year. I think this last game is a little bit of an outlier. I think those guys are comfortable with the rotation."

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR RENALDO HILL

On his assessment of last week's game:

"I thought it was a game of halves. Obviously, we got into some tough spots in the first half, but the guys fought hard. Three field goals, the touchdown coming off of a late scramble, but I thought that we were in a good spot. The second half, those field goals turned into touchdowns. 21 points in the second half, obviously, you want to minimize those situations and see if we can hold them to field goals and try to get our offense the ball back and see if we can get out of this hole that we're in."

On if playing over 40 plays in the first half 'caught up with the defense' in the second half:

"There were a lot of quick turnarounds out there, without guys being out there for a lot of reps. We just wanted our guys to continue to compete, finish off the game. Like I said, we thought we're in a good spot. Once we got into the second half, the touchdowns came, and I think that was probably the accumulation of the reps we got in the first half."

On the 51-yard touchdown run on fourth-and-one:

"We would've loved to have been in another personnel grouping. We were anticipating another personnel grouping. Kind of got caught in the wrong deal. Obviously, we want to go out there and try to survive the play, not anticipating that it's going to be a 51-yarder. It's more so on the coaches than the players."

On if the staff was anticipating that the Jaguars would line up with a different personnel grouping:

"Yes."

On OLB Chris Rumph II:

"Chris had an amazing offseason and training camp. He's been doing really well for us, that's why he's getting reps throughout the season, these first three games. We expect big things from Chris, to step in there and play a starting role. We know that he has good pass-rush ability, but we're expecting him to do a great job of setting the run and stopping the run on first and second down so that he can express his true talent there."

On the impact of OLB Joey Bosa being placed on Reserve/Injured:

"I think that it's going to be a combination of more guys filling in at that spot. Obviously, it's hard to replace what Joey [Bosa] does and the attention that he brings. We have some good, talented guys behind and they'll step up in that role. We just have to be mindful of those rep counts because we haven't had a lot of edge guys out there, as well. I think the addition of [OLB Derrek] Tuszka, coming in here and being able to dispel some guys on some downs, I think that will help, as well."

On the number of players that will 'rotate' within the EDGE group:

"We have about four or five. Obviously, if you add the addition of [LB] Kenneth Murray [Jr.] doing it last year, we have about four or five guys that can roll in there. Obviously, Chris [Rumph II] and K-Mack [OLB Khalil Mack] can be in there a majority of the time, but we do have guys that can dispel them."

On if he has to 'recalibrate' what he 'believes this defense can be':

"It's still early in the season. Being optimistic that we still are going to be that defense that we set out to be at the beginning of the year. Getting all of those guys in there, I still think that that can come in front of us. You just have to get guys to the game and be healthy. [CB J.C. Jackson] is getting himself healthy. It's still early in the year. We expect that number one corner to be out there and really man a side of the field for us. I think that he's feeling good. He's in good spirits right now. We're looking forward to these upcoming practices and to the game."

On Tuszka:

"A tough, smart guy. He's reliable. He gives you special teams value from Day 1. He's a guy who can come in here and learn his job within a couple of days and be able to dispel you. He's been a part of this system before, so, I think, just the verbiage will be him translating a few things here and there, but he should be able to spot us in some areas and continue to grow into that role."

On how the Texans' offense is different from last year:

"There are a lot of similarities from last year, but you also feel like there's a little wrinkle of some of the stuff that we saw with [Las] Vegas. It's a little combination of both. I think the guys, where they are located at, is pretty much similar, so it does give us a nod and know where guys are going to align and how they operate from there."

On Texans QB Davis Mills and his development from last year:

"I thought that he was savvy, even as a rookie. I feel like he has more control of that offense. Obviously, having his then-Quarterback Coach and now-Offensive Coordinator [Pep Hamilton] in that same role, I think that helps, not having a ton of change. He looks a lot more comfortable. He looks like he's in command there."

On areas within the defense that he's looking to improve:

"We've been definitely trying to put a focus on third down. I think it really ties into first down. Can we not let those yards bleed and get into third-and-shorts? See if we can get them into some longer situations. Khalil [Mack] and Chris Rumph [II], we can get them into some pass situations [on third down] and let them express their talents. It's trying to get them into longer situations. We looked at our third downs, there were a ton of third-and-one and third-and-twos, and our guys played really great in those areas, but we definitely don't want to live in that area. Trying to get them into some situations where we can play a little coverage and tie that into the rush, that would be ideal for us."