



QUOTES

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LOS ANGELES CHARGERS GENERAL MANAGER TOM TELESCO

Opening Statement:

"To start off, first a congratulations to the Patriots. They beat us thoroughly on Sunday and outplayed us in every way. I have a lot of respect for [Patriots Head Coach] Bill Belichick and their whole staff. [Patriots Offensive Coordinator] Josh McDaniels, I know really well and is one of the best in the league. He will be a head coach in the league again at some point. [Patriots Defensive Coordinator] Brian Flores, he's an excellent coach. He'll be a head coach at some point and is very good. The special teams coach named [Patriots Special Teams Coach] Joe Judge, who's excellent at what he does. He'll likely be a head coach at some point. So, they have an excellent staff and great players obviously. They beat us pretty thoroughly on Sunday. I also want to really thank [Patriots Chairman & CEO] Mr. [Robert] Kraft and [Patriots President] Jonathan Kraft for honoring Makenna Mebane before the game. I just thought that was a really classy gesture by them that was appreciated by everyone in our organization. Even though we are opponents on the field and competitors on the field, there is a mutual respect amongst clubs and thought that was a great demonstration for that.

Back to us, the last game of the year clouds the type of year that we had. We don't feel great right now, but we have to look at the whole body of work where we went 12-4, which was tied for the best record in the AFC. It will take us a little bit of time to get over this game. I do want to mention too about our ownership — [Controlling Owner and Chairman of the Board] Dean [Spanos], [President of Football Operations] John [Spanos] and [President of Business Operations] A.G. [Spanos]. They made significant investments in this team and gave the resources needed to compete at a high level. It's not always just financial [resources]. Some of it is financial with the retention of coaches, support staff, adding support staff, anything we may need in the building, or anything needed travel-wise. With anything needed to help us win — their answer is always, 'Yes.' It's even more than financial [resources]. It's about their time, their advice and support for all of us. It's critical for a winning team to have that and we have that here. I think when we preach to all of our players and coaches — we talk about faith, family and football. We talk about it in that order. When you're a family-run organization, it's a lot easier to spread that message to everybody below. We see that on a daily basis and that's really important for us for what we're trying to build here.

As far as players, coaches and how the year went — we made some significant steps this year. I think 2017 was more about building a culture and building a physical and mental toughness. Getting that grit and resolve. I think we did that two years ago. This year, what I really saw was players taking ownership of that in the locker room. [They took Head Coach] Anthony's [Lynn] vision and his voice and policed it in the locker room. They created that accountability between player-to-player. That was big this year. I saw a lot of leaders, not just one or two guys. I saw some young players step up as leaders and a lot of players buy in to what we're trying to do. It was great to see that improvement. It's not a one-step process, this is a multi-step process to get to where we want to go. We took some significant steps this year.

Obviously, my main focus is the product on the field. Even me, I couldn't help but see the buzz that was building throughout the season with this team — inside the building and outside the building. You really saw it in December — the win at Pittsburgh, the win at Kansas City and national TV games, and then our home game against Baltimore. I thought the atmosphere was awesome. That was great and the way it should be. I think a lot of that was people getting excited about what they're seeing on the field. Our playoff game against Baltimore, 1.1 million households in Los Angeles watched that game. I think there was another 350,000 households in San Diego, so it's 1.5 million [households] watching us play in the playoffs. I think that for our fans, no matter if you're from Los Angeles, San Diego or anywhere across the country — after listening to two years, three years, or four years of relocation talk, I think it was great for people to really sit back and enjoy the players and team on the field. To enjoy football again. This was a team that could do that. I mean, I'm biased, but I think it's an easy team to root for. They're tough. They're blue-collar, but they play an exciting brand of football and there's a little bit of personality in there too.

I think if you watched Backstage: Chargers, you could see some of our players without their helmet on and get to know them a little bit as players. Obviously, the games were fun. That's what we're here to do — to win. I'm proud of the players and the coaches. They're a great group of guys. We just didn't quite get to where we wanted to go and is obviously very disappointing. We played a better football team in New England, at New England, and we have to figure out how to get past that hump next year — but before that, you have to start at the bottom of the mountain and work your way back up again. With that, I open up to any questions that you may have.”

On whether the loss to New England provides focus heading into the 2019 season:

“We will sit down and analyze this game. Even like Coach [Lynn] said, it's hard to do right after the game, for this one, but we'll certainly analyze and see where we could've done better. We have the whole body of work too [to analyze], it's just hard to do right now. You'll look at all 16 games and both playoff games. There will certainly some things from this game to look at and see what happened. When I was watching the tape, it just didn't seem like that was us out there on both sides of the ball. A lot of it had to do with New England, but we just didn't play nearly well enough.”

On whether will be tough to analyze the film from the loss against New England:

“Actually, it's not. We have tape to watch over and over. We can see what they did, see what we did. What worked and what didn't work. So, no. It's tough to do emotionally right now, but when we actually get down to it we'll try to figure out where it was and get better. Look at all of the things we did really well this year. You go 12-4 with the type of schedule we had, was not easy. So there were a lot of good things this year, but we have to look at the good and the bad. That's what the offseason is all about — self scouting yourself.”

On TE Hunter Henry:

“I think he started the first play of the game [last week]. He ended up playing 13 or 14 snaps. Not bad. I'm glad he got a chance to get back on the field. He did so much work to get there and that was great [to see]. This will just help him in the offseason program. He does need to get some rest just like everybody else. When you rehab during the season, it's a full-time job. I think that maybe even [mentally], it's good to know that he was back out on the field blocking and hit the ground a couple of times. He ran some routes. Obviously, he was not 100 percent there yet, but certainly good enough to play. It was nice to have him out there again.”

On whether playing in the game against New England helped his confidence:

“You'd have to ask Hunter. He's done this probably since grade school with playing football. You'd have to ask Hunter that, but I know it was nice to have him back out there again.”

On the leadership of QB Philip Rivers this year:

“Tremendous. I can't rank his years, but I know he had an excellent year this year all the way through. A lot of that has to do with him and a lot of it has to do with the team that's built around him on offense and defense. He's forever our leader and had a tremendous year this year.”

On the importance of contract negotiations with Philip Rivers in the offseason:

“Well, I can tell you that he's not going anywhere. So, he's going to be here. We'll talk at the right point [in time] as far as the moves we need to make in the offseason, the resources we have and see how it all fits in. But, he's not going anywhere.”

On the biggest needs heading into the 2019 season:

“Well, that's what we're going to use the next 30 days to work on. We, and especially me, need some space from the last game until we start making big decisions. I mean, I have some thoughts in my head, but I need some time. At least a couple of weeks. Then we'll sit down and really start to plan out the offseason. I just don't want to do that right now. I need some time.”

On G Forrest Lamp:

“We'll he'll be right in the mix next season — I know that. As far as evaluating, it's really just watching practice this year. So at least we know he's back on the field, he's healthy and he's playing. That's good to know. He'll have the full offseason this year which he didn't have last year. Last year, he was rehabbing during the offseason program. So, with [having] a full offseason program, like in the way that [WR] Mike Williams got this past year and a full training camp — he'll be ready to go.”

On the offensive line:

"I think our offensive line did a pretty good job. It's funny, for 13 weeks I thought they did an excellent job — and then the last three weeks of the regular season, the standard that they had created the first 13 weeks wasn't quite there for whatever reason. We have to look at that and see where it is. Then, the Baltimore playoff game, they played outstanding that game — and that is probably one of the best [defensive] fronts in the league. In New England, none of us played well. That's what we have to look at. The big body of work was [good]. Our average yards-per-carry was one of the tops in the league, and it wasn't just [RB] Melvin Gordon [III]. It was [RBs] Austin Ekeler, Justin Jackson and Detrez Newsome. We ran the ball well. [We had] a lot of explosive run plays. We were one of the top teams in the league with that. We were in the top-10 for least sacks allowed. There were a lot of good things there. What we need to look at is, those last three games wasn't quite to those standards they had the first 13, so we need to take a look at that."

On those late-season struggles for the offensive line:

"I don't think we really have to fix anything. I think we're pretty good. I don't think it's broken. I think we're in good shape. We just have to figure out, maybe, what wasn't going as planned those last three games — but again, we came back against Baltimore and did a great job, so it certainly isn't broken. Those guys carried us for a while. We were running the ball really well and pass-protecting well. I'm happy with it."

On the 2018 Draft Class:

"As a whole, other than [LB] Kyzir [White] — who had gotten hurt pretty early, though Kyzir White had earned a starting job when he got hurt. The rest of the guys, other than [WR] Dylan [Cantrell] — I guess, Dylan didn't contribute as much — they all contributed a role. Obviously, [S] Derwin's [James] role was a huge contribution. You don't necessarily expect a rookie to come in — even from the first round — and make that much of a difference on either side of the ball, but he made a huge difference. [LB] Uchenna Nwosu, [DT] Justin Jones — those two guys played really significant roles for us in the defense. They'll get more as we move forward. I'm really happy with those guys. Justin Jackson, when his number was called, he was ready to go. What we saw with those guys was that it wasn't too big for them. They took on a role that will get bigger as we move on. I'm proud of that group as a whole. A lot of times — and we've seen it. I've seen it on other teams and I've seen it here — sometimes the rookies hit a wall around Thanksgiving. We play more games than they do in college, it's much more intense. Our guys never hit the rookie wall. I think that's a credit to them. I think it's a credit to John Lott — our [Head] Strength and Conditioning Coach — Arthur Hightower, who works with the players as our [Senior] Director of Player Engagement, and Herb Martin, our psychologist. They kind of give these guys the resources they need. The rookie year is very difficult for them. They really never hit the wall. They helped us all the way through, including playoff games. This offseason is always big for a rookie going into their second year."

On S Derwin James as a leader:

"[He stepped up as a leader] probably a little earlier than the end of the season. He has some leadership qualities. It's hard for a player at his age, when they come into an NFL locker room with much older players, to lead — but he's very mature for his age and you can see that leadership come out. We had a lot of leaders, but he was one of them."

On James' versatility:

"Early on, I'd say yes [his versatility was surprising] because there is a lot of mental work that goes into playing multiple positions in this league. Especially for a younger player, it's difficult. He took on a lot. [Defensive Coordinator] Gus [Bradley] gave him a lot of responsibilities early on and he did handle it very well."

On the linebacker position:

"The good news is, overall, our injuries this year were well before the average. That was the good news. The bad news was that the guys that got hurt — that one position group got hit hard. Between Kyzir getting hurt early, [LBs] Denzel Perryman, Jatavis Brown — we didn't quite recover from that. As far as having other players step up, we had players step up on special teams. Even [LB] Kyle Emanuel did a good job, but he's not an inside linebacker by trade. We had to do some different things in different games. We probably used more defensive backs. Gus [Bradley] did a great job. That position group, it just hurt that we had some guys hurt there. It's one group that we need to focus on pretty heavily in the offseason."

On CB Jason Verrett:

"He's going to be a free agent. He's certainly a possibility [to return]. As far as I know — he's still around a bit — he is on track with that injury. It's a little bit of a longer injury, the Achilles tendon. The good news is, especially nowadays, even with defensive backs, they can come back from that and come back to where they were before. That's good news. Yes, that's certainly a possibility."

On S Adrian Phillips:

"He's in the discussions that we will have moving forward in the next couple of weeks. He has been a great story for what he has done and the way he came into the league. I'm sure most of you know the story. We brought him to rookie mini camp on a tryout — not even to sign him. He looked good, but it wasn't like, 'Alright, we have to sign him right away.' We sent him home and then we signed him like four weeks later. He wins a job and then — I literally have released him eight times. Eight times, he came into my office to let him go. He always handled it professionally. He just kept working and working. To see a player finally earn a job on the 53 [man active roster], then earn a role, then earn a starting role, then be an excellent special teamer, then be a big part of our defense and go to the Pro Bowl — it's a story that you can tell other kids for years and years about what he's done. He was kind of the heart and soul of the defense, too. Anybody that has watched us build our team over the last couple of years — I think you can see that we like to draft, develop and re-sign our own, and then be very selective in free agency with the [signings like C] Mike Pouncey, [T] Russell Okung, [CB] Casey Hayward [Jr.] and others. We like to retain our own. I think we have a good core here. Is it realistic to keep every single player? It's not, but these are discussions that we will have in the next couple of weeks as far as these are the resources we have under the cap and this is how it's going to fit. He was the heart and soul of the defense, no doubt."

On the evaluation of Verrett with his injury history:

"There's risk involved and there's high reward involved. The one thing is that we know him very well as a person. There are a lot of factors. He's had a rough last couple of years. Even this past year when he wasn't playing, he was still a pretty big part of the defense just being around and being a leader."

On TE Antonio Gates wanting to continue playing:

"He already stopped and we talked on Monday. I talked to Coach [Lynn] on Monday. I'll say the same thing that I said last year at this time — he can still play. He still has snaps in his body. He still has catches, he still has touchdowns in his body. I will be forever grateful — obviously, last year we decided to move on from him. The situation changed and we go back to Antonio. He could have said, 'You know what? I'm going to play, but I'll go play for somebody else.' He could have come back to play for us and be bitter about it. He was neither. He was an awesome teammate and great to be around. I'll never forget that. I'll be forever grateful for that. For next year, if you ask me now, my heart says, 'Yeah, he'll be back next year.' But, you put the GM hat on and you have to look at what the role is, what are the resources under the cap and how everything fits together. We will come to that conclusion a lot quicker than we did last year. We have some thought to do on that one. The short answer is, I don't know yet."

On the feasibility of having Gates as part of a tight end group with Virgil Green and Hunter Henry:

"You can usually figure out a way to do almost everything. We have to talk about it. If it wasn't realistic at all, I'd probably say that you can't do it. We would figure out a way."

On RB Melvin Gordon III entering the final year of his contract:

"I think it's something that we'll definitely look at. I mean, he's a huge part of our offense. He's a warrior for us. He does all of the little things to be a great player that you don't see in this room — all of the little things you need. I love having him. We're happy to have him. It's probably something that we'll look at in the offseason. The good thing is that we have a lot of good, young talent. Trying to retain that core moving forward will take some work."

On WR Tyrell Williams:

"He has earned his next contract, certainly. He came in here as a college free agent from a small school, Western Oregon. Since their school is on the quarters system, he was not at any of our offseason work that first year. By a league rule, wasn't allowed to because he was finishing his school. He missed our whole offseason program, which for a college free agent is usually the kiss of death. It's hard to make the team that way. He did some phone calls and some FaceTime with Fred Graves, I think he was our receivers coach then, about learning the playbook. When he came back for training camp, he knew our playbook inside and out, which for a young guy that hadn't been here was really impressive. That was the first time I was like, 'This kid, he may have something to him.' That was really impressive that he could do that. Then, he just got progressively better and better. This past year, his game was already a really solid game and he kind of took it to the next level this year. He's earned his second contract. Those are discussions that we have to have. I just don't have really hard answers this soon after the season."

On the potential of drafting a quarterback:

"Since the day I arrived here, it's something that we've looked at every year. It just hasn't lined up yet. It's too hard to tell right now."

On if the potential of a work stoppage would affect offering longer or shorter term contracts:

"I don't think how that could potentially happen to affect signing any of our players. Eventually, [we will be] playing games. That's not really on my radar at all."

On Head Coach Anthony Lynn's job and building toughness in the culture:

"I mentioned earlier that I did see an advancement of our players really taking his message and then taking it on themselves — kind of everyone in that locker room. For a scale of toughness, I'm pretty pleased with our mental and physical toughness, and it's really more mental — especially this year. We had a lot of travel, a lot of trips and some challenges. They didn't really affect us at all. Anthony cares about one award, that's the Super Bowl. To me, he was the Coach of the Year this year with what he did. I know he doesn't want to hear that, but to me, he was. Certainly the last two years, but I know it's a yearly award. What he has done with this team, the vision he has brought, the toughness he has brought, the unique challenges that we have with building this team and building this fan base. I think he was just tremendous. Our players really believe in him. It's easy to see. I think you guys can see that. You're at practice, you deal with him on a daily basis. They really believe in him and he believes in the players. If you don't have that, you have nothing. We have our leader. That box is checked, I know that."

On if DE Joey Bosa can avoid surgery on his foot:

"He came through well. We knew there would be some soreness here or there. I'm just thrilled he was back on the field and able to play again. There are no plans for that this offseason."

On Bosa's season:

"He was probably a little rusty to start, but rallied pretty darn good for a guy that missed all of training camp and that much of the season. When he starts playing, everyone is really in mid-season mode at that point. He just brings a level of talent you can't [replicate]. I mean, we had some guys step up and play very well — Isaac Rochell and Damion Square, he played all four spots on the line. Those guys did a great job while Joey was out. It made our defensive line stronger for the rest of the year, but it's undeniable that when Joey is out there, it's a lot different. It's not just in the passing game, it's in the running game. His length, flexibility, quickness, his toughness — he's the total package there."

On Phillips' arm injury:

"He's planning on being at the Pro Bowl, so that's good news."

On playing an international game and the fans in London:

"I'll say, when we go back to the East Coast and play games, I'm always amazed at how many Chargers fans there are. There are a lot of Chargers fans on the East Coast. We see them at the hotel, we see them behind our bench area. That's really cool to see. We're in such a bubble here sometimes that you forget, but outside of Southern California, too, there are a lot of Chargers fans. I can tell you from being a kid and growing up on the East Coast — the games were different, they didn't have as many games on TV — but the four o'clock game where I grew up, a lot of times was the Chargers. So say it's December in Buffalo, N.Y., and you watch the Chargers game — it's beautiful with blue skies and they have the nice uniforms. It was [Hall of Fame QB] Dan Fouts and [Hall of Fame WR] Charlie Joiner, it was like, 'Wow, look at that place.' There are a lot of people on the East Coast that kind of grew up like that. The fan base we have on the East Coast is pretty darn good. The game in London was really fun. It felt like a home game with the amount of fans that were there. I know that most of the fans there are fans of all teams, really, but there was a pretty good Charger presence there. It felt like a big game. It felt like a playoff game, the atmosphere there. I thought that was great. Whether we're in London next year or Mexico City, I think they're supposed to announce that soon, I don't know when. I have not [heard anything yet], but I know we're playing somewhere outside the States. I don't know where yet. It's good for us to break up the schedule a little bit."

On if the team would try the NFL to play on the East Coast for the game leading up to any potential game in London:

"Yes. It worked out well for us. At least for us, it would be too hard to come back out and go all the way back out again."

On if he will be rooting for the Rams going forward in the playoffs:

"I'm a big fan of [Rams Head Coach] Sean McVay and [Rams General Manager] Les Snead. Those are really good guys, fun to talk football with, down to Earth and I think it's just really good for football in Los Angeles, I really do. They're a fun team to watch: Offense and defense. Right now, I say I'm not watching those games Sunday, but I know I will watch both games. I know it's going to happen. I won't be happy watching them, but I enjoy those two guys a lot. I think they're really good at what they do too."

On NT Brandon Mebane's role as a leader on the team and the year he had:

"It was such a tough year for him. I talk about Adrian Phillips being the heart and soul of the defense. I mean, Brandon's right there. Tremendous leader. What he had to deal with this year, I've never been around anything like that before. He was gone for a long stretch and then he came back, I don't remember what game it was that he came back, but he came back and his first game back he played really, really well. For what he was going through it's not like he was able to really get a lot of workouts done and he still played at a really high level for us this year. Beyond that, what he went through family wise was really difficult for him. We talk about how we all have our families at home, but your second family is your football family here. We spend a lot of time with each other, the nature of our business is really emotional, we lean on each other, so at least he had his second family to come back to, to lean on. I really appreciate how Dean, John and A.G. [Spanos] really helped us to navigate this. It's a situation we haven't handled before. Dean flew Brandon back to Omaha when his daughter had a complication — and, it was like that. He was one of those heart and soul guys and played really really well for us this year."

On how long Rivers will be able to continue to play:

"You'll have to ask Philip. I don't know. I have to almost think year to year, but I know he has more than that but for planning purposes you're always looking just to make sure. I couldn't put a number on it but I haven't seen drop off in Philip since I arrived here six years ago. In the six years I've been here, he's even playing better now than when I first got here so I guess the sky's the limit, but for how long he wants to play, you'd have to ask him that but we're really lucky to have him."

On S Jahleel Addae's season:

"Jahleel, he's the heartbeat back there. He sets a tempo for us. Fully realizing he's probably better closer to the line of scrimmage. He played on there late in the year. He sets a tempo for us. He's a physical hitter, smart, gets the players lined up and I really appreciate what he does for us and how he handles the situation. We brought in Derwin James and Derwin can do a lot of different things. We wanted to play Derwin up closer to the line of scrimmage in different ways and that means Jahleel to play different positions and Jahleel handled it really well. There's some plays I'm sure he'd like have back but there were some good plays too. You want to go to war with guys like him. You want to go to war with him every day of the week."

On extending Philip Rivers contract this year:

"It wouldn't necessarily have to be in the next couple months. We have the whole off season in terms of next years cap. We have to see how everything fits in resources wise with our cap and go from there. He's not going anywhere."

On S Rayshawn Jenkins this season:

"He hit people. He really did. He hit people. He did a great job on special teams this year. Our coverage units on teams with excellent. He was one of them — fast, aggressive, big hitter, enjoyed the role. Then, he had some games in the middle of the year where he had a different role on defense but then the last couple where he actually played a lot of snap in the middle of the field. Again, he's a true center fielder type safety. I'm not sure yet but I know he has a good feel for the game and he's physical and he hits, and he can run. It's good to see him playing a little bit bigger role on defense. Every special teamer, that that's their main role, they want a bigger role on defense and he had some different roles but he had a chance to play a little bit there this year. He's a guy that will probably play either safety spot."

On S Jaylen Watkins:

"He's a free agent. Certainly, a possibility [to bring back]. He was going kind of be a little bit of a nickel corner, kind of a little bit of a safety. We didn't have him long enough on the field to see exactly where his role was going to be."

On what the next few months are like for general managers:

"It's not really getting away but a lot of it is just planning with the senior bowl next week and then the combine the end of February, some draft meetings in February. The month of February is just heavy planning for the off season and what our plan is for free agency, the draft, developing those players and that sort of stuff."

On if the Chargers have found a kicker:

"I hope so. Thank God. I think the football gods are finally smiling down on us. When you had as many at bats as we did you figure at some point, you're going to hit on one. He did tremendous. He was awesome. We had a list of kickers to bring in when [former K] Caleb [Sturgis] was hurt. We had some guys on there. [Director of Player Personnel] JoJo Wooden said, 'Hey, I think we should put [K] Michael Badgley on the list. He had a good preseason with the Colts.' [Director of College Scouting] Kevin Kelly, one of our scouts who lives in Indianapolis actually, he saw him in preseason and liked him a lot. He'd seen his college reports, he was at the senior bowl last year. We brought him in, he had a great workout, but he also had a great mindset too. He came in and did a great job. We're really happy for him and happy for us that we have a guy that we feel great about to go out there and make some kicks. He made some big kicks for us, won some games for us."

On when K Michael Badgley was released and brought back:

“Calculate. Calculate and strategy. You have to know the League and know what’s out there and know what people need. There’s always that risk that to put him on practice squad he has to clear through waivers first. We felt like he’d be able to do that because of his body work at that point and what else was available and who needed kickers. We knew we liked him so we wanted to keep him and then the next week Caleb [Sturgis] just didn’t handle it, so we went back to Michael and hopefully the rest is history.”

On if learning from Colts K Adam Vinatieri helped him develop:

“No doubt. It was only an off season and a training camp but there is no doubt that learning from one of the best to play that’s ever played especially from the neck up as far as being a kicker in this league. There’s no doubt that that helped him. That was one of the first things he said when he came into sign was how much he learned from that in the short amount of time.”

On Badgley developing the leg strength for kick offs:

“Yes. The leg strength is there we’ve seen that. I think once he matures and works out a little bit more, I think it will come.”

On having the 28th pick in the 2019 NFL Draft:

“The process stays the same but it’s a lot different. There’s no way you can really narrow it down and pin point who’s going to be there at 28 but it’s a good problem to have. Come draft day it’s not going to be awesome but it’s a good problem to have. If you have a good enough scouting staff, which we have, and prepare the right way, which we will, then it won’t be an issue.”

On if he’ll be at the senior year:

“Yes. Mobile this year can be really cold.”

On his relationship with President of Football Operations John Spanos:

“Yes. You nailed it right on the head right there. There great thing about our ownership is that they’re in the building every day. Certainly, John and A.G. every day, Dean, seems like every day, so conversations are easy, communication is easy. Having John with a football background, sounding background, another sounding board to talk about things it’s a huge help. This is an industry where you need advice, you need sounding boards, you need counter arguments and to talk things out and to have ownership with a background in that, it’s invaluable.”

On who has the final say:

“The great thing here is Dean, John and A.G. give me the resources to do my job and they empower me to do my job. A lot of it is, very rarely do you ever have to come in and slam your fist down and say, ‘this is what we’re doing no matter what anybody cares about.’ It’s a lot of discussion. A lot of discussion with Anthony. I’m greatly that they give me the opportunity to do the job. We have a great staff of people. Like I said earlier, there’s so much infrastructure you have to build with your football team, support staff, it goes pretty deep, scouting staff. And they give us those resources. That’s part of the reason we were able to get to where we are right now.”

On if he’s wearing a John Carroll University Sweatshirt:

“Yes.”

On DT Darius Philon and NT Damion Square:

“Our defensive line, interior group, I thought did a really nice job this year. They all played a lot of snaps. They all played different roles. Ideally, we’d like to have both those guys back. I think Darius Philon we’ve seen year, after year, after year get better, and better, and better. He can affect a lot of plays with his quickness and pass rush ability. Damion is the glue up front. You can play him in so many different spots and he plays those spots well. It’s not only that you can put him in that spot, but he can play it well. At maybe 290 pounds he’s very strong, great leverage and great hand movements. He played some nose tackle, he played some end when Joey [Bosa] was out. If you want to win and win big in the League you need role players who can play their role at a really high level. Adrian Phillips and Damion Square and a lot of other players, [WR] Mike Williams this year, Mike wasn’t a [full-time] starter but a big-time player for us, but going back to the defensive line, those guys did a really nice job. You need a lot of depth there and we had that this year.”

On CB Desmond King II:

“He’s playing so well at the role he has I don’t know that you want to move him but he does have the versatility to do a lot of different things. The role he played right now, he’s really good at it. The way the League is, it’s more spread out, if you’re going to play a lot more defensive backs that have to be able to tackle. They have to be able to blitz when they have to. They have to be tough and he’s built for it. Just even body wise he’s built for it and he has great instincts too. Those guys are playing at such a high level in one spot but I do think you could use them for different things.”

On CB Michael Davis' progression throughout the season:

"It's really the same progression that [CB] Trevor Williams had made. Trevor made the team as a college free agent, won a role his first year, second year became a starter. Last year, Michael Davis won a role on the football team. This year, he made a spot on the roster and came in. When Trevor got hurt, Michael stepped in there and played starter football for us. He's a player that really, talk about developing players, [Defensive Backs Coach] Ron Milus and [Assistant Defensive Backs Coach] Chris Harris in working with Michael he really came along. He was targeted a lot because Casey Hayward is on the other side and I thought Michael played pretty good football this year. I think he'll get better with more experience but his length, his height and his speed and the fact that he's an aggressive tackler I think that showed this year."

On if CB Trevor Williams will come back next year:

"Trevor is restricted but yeah. I'm a big fan. He had a tough year, tough with the injury. He just never really got back to where he was, but he should be good to go for next year health wise."