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WEEK 13 — PODIUM AVAILABILITY

Wednesday, November 27, 2019 | Hoag Performance Center | Costa Mesa, Calif.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH ANTHONY LYNN

On the season:

"We kind of know the odds are stacked against us. This group is going to fight, I can tell you that. We're going to show up, we're going to compete and we're going to play every game. We're going to figure out a way to win some of these close games that we've been losing. We're looking forward to playing. We haven't played in a while and want to get that bad taste out of our mouth. We know going to Denver isn't going to be easy. It's going to be a hard-fought game."

On protecting the football:

"We always emphasize protecting the football at any point in the season, especially going on the road. Guys know what we have to do. We have been turning the ball over [too much] and not taking it away enough. They know I'm not going to keep talking about it, too. We're going to take care of the football or else."

"I think guys are trying to make plays. It's not intentional. If I thought it was intentional, that would be a problem. It's just guys trying to make plays."

On the team's success in December:

"This team, I feel like we're in great shape. I feel like we have the stamina to finish strong. We've always done a good job of finishing games in December. Yeah, I hope we continue to do that. What we've done in the past has nothing to do with what we're doing right now. We have to go out and make it happen."

On preparing for multiple quarterbacks:

"You know, we've faced so many different quarterbacks this year, it really doesn't matter. Whoever they put on the field, it's more about us."

On the impact of weather:

"I think going out and practicing today in the rain — with slippery balls and cutting on the surface. I think all of that is going to have an effect if we have some bad weather this weekend. It just gets us used to it, acclimated to it. We kind of get spoiled here in Southern California, so we needed a rainy day like today."

On getting back defensive leaders:

"[S Derwin] DJ [James Jr.] and [S Adrian] AP [Phillips] are leaders on our defense and they're good players. Not having those players out there period didn't help us, but we've had more than enough to get it done. There are no excuses."

On LB Denzel Perryman playing less snaps against Kansas City:

"Denzel, it was just soreness and then the type of game that it was going to be — just a space game — we put different players out on the field just for space. Denzel is one of our better run-stoppers for sure. I don't think stopping the run against the Chiefs was an issue. It was their passing attack."

On replacing CB Michael Davis:

"[CB Brandon Facyson] is going to compete for that spot, absolutely. We have Facyson, [CB Tevaughn] Campbell — a young man that we just brought up off the practice squad — and [practice squad CB Quenton] Meeks. His dad has been a long-time assistant coach in this league, so he understands the game very well. They're going to compete for that spot."



On S Jaylen Watkins:

“Jaylen, he’s in the mix everywhere in the secondary. He has such great versatility — strong safety, free safety, nickel, corner. He can do a lot of good things for us. Yeah, he’s in the mix [to play cornerback].”

On the benefit of playing one game in the past 20 days:

“It’s helped us get a little healthier, I can tell you that. Guys are feeling better. I think any time at this point in the year if you get this type of break, when your team is probably beat up the most, it’s got to help a little bit.”

On the season:

“It’s been frustrating to lose the close games that we’ve lost this year. At the same time, the odds may be stacked against us, but we know that we still have an opportunity in front of us. You have to play them one at a time, but we still have an opportunity.”

On evaluating during the bye week:

“Last week, I evaluated everybody — coaches, players. It’s not just one guy why we’re 4-7. [QB] Philip [Rivers] understands that we can’t keep turning the ball over. He understands that.

“I mean, if [CB] Casey Hayward [Jr.] would keep getting beat out there at the corner or something, you’d have to consider [a change] out there as well. Everybody is being evaluated. Casey has done an outstanding job this year, but I’m just saying [as an example] if he hadn’t. Everybody is being evaluated. Hell, if we don’t win enough games, I’m going to be — looking at another head coach here. It is what it is.”

On making changes:

“I don’t plan on having to make that decision. I plan on us going and playing our tails off this weekend and getting back in that win column.”

On QB Philip Rivers:

“Most great athletes, they respond well. I believe Philip is going to respond well.”

On the key to winning close games:

“I think the harder you work, the more you prepare, the luckier you get. Not to say that we don’t work hard or that we don’t prepare because I believe [we do that], but we’re minus-nine in turnovers. You’re not going to win a lot of games in this league with a minus-nine turnover ratio. The bottom line is that we’re not taking it away enough and we turn it over too much. I love the effort and the energy that the guys play with, but we’re killing ourselves.”

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS QUARTERBACK PHILIP RIVERS**On how Denver has changed since the first matchup:**

“Not a lot. They’re still playing good defense. They did in our game and really have been since then. As we know, it’ll be a heck of a challenge.”

On the bye week:

“I tried to not focus on anything for a few days and then just regroup and come back ready to go — ready to work, have a good week of preparation and get ready for the Broncos.”

On improving:

“You just keep going. It’s been a tough two-game stretch. I would not say a tough year of turnovers, but a tough two-game stretch. Really, unlike any two games I can remember having back-to-back. Again, you bear down and make an even more concerted effort. Obviously, you never go into a game saying, ‘I don’t mind turning it over.’ You’re always thinking, ‘Don’t turn the ball over.’ You bear down even harder to not turn it over. I believe I can get that done.”

On turnovers as criteria to evaluate performance:

“Heck yeah. I think it’s no question. I think, over the bulk of my playing career, I’ve probably been better than average at that. There have been spans and spurts that have not been better than average. This last couple-game stretch would fall into that category. Certainly, I have to do a better job of it.”



On external talk:

“Nah, that doesn’t add anything to it. I don’t hear it, to be honest with you, but you saying it makes me laugh really. Three or four throws are different or if we finish that drive in Kansas City, the narrative is probably flipped and I played the same game. We very well could have found a way to win those games even with some of the poor plays. That has never been a motivating factor for me.”

On the season:

“Every week, we’ve felt a sense of urgency. I don’t think we’ve ever moseyed through a season and then said, ‘Okay, now we’ll bear down.’ Again, I think the focus, effort and everything was there the last couple of weeks. Again, I feel sick about the turnovers and especially the effect that has had on our chances to win those last two games. We obviously know where we are big picture-wise. I think it’s just focusing on trying to find a way to win this game this week. Individually, find a way to do my job better. I think just keeping it as simple as that is the best approach.”

On balancing mitigating turnovers while keeping his identity as a passer:

“There is a fine line somewhere. If you don’t pull the trigger and make some of these throws, you won’t make any plays. It’ll kind of be that, ‘Golly, are they going to make a play or what?’ I think there is a fine line. A turnover here and there is part of it. It just can’t come in the bulk that they’ve come in the past two weeks and the situations they’ve come in. I think there is that fine line. Again, for me, there are a few in each of these games that have just been poor throws. They weren’t poor decisions. There have been a few decisions which were poor. The long one on third-and-10, there’s [RB Austin] Ekeleer standing right in front of me. He may [have gotten] the first down. It’s like a punt, which it was, but he may have been able to get. Those little things like that, to me, is not being afraid to pull the trigger. That’s just making a better decision. Some of the others, things happen. I’m going to throw that in-cut to [WR] Keenan [Allen] every time. I’m just going to make the throw most of the time. I don’t think it’s something that I’ll be wrestling with during the game. Again, it’s always been a priority. It’s just a matter of executing and getting it done.”

On the deep interception intended for WR Andre Patton:

“Yeah, he flashes. You go, ‘Shoot, I have a chance to hit a big one.’ You under throw it a little bit and then you look up and see you had guys in front of you. [I got] a little greedy in that moment.”

On Thanksgiving:

“It’s a good day. I have a lot to be thankful for. My whole family, from my side, is actually coming out. It will be a houseful. It will be good. Obviously, half the day will be spent up here, working and getting ready. It’s a good day at our house.”

On QB Easton Stick:

“We’re in the quarterback room together all day, every day. I don’t think it’s so much working with him and mentoring, from that standpoint. I think, what comes with that is Easton, [myself], [QB] Tyrod [Taylor] and [Offensive Coordinator] Shane [Steichen] in that room — Easton works awfully hard at it. He’s picking up all that he wants to pick up. Whatever he wants to pick up is fair game from all of us. He has been great with the way he prepares, works at it and the things he finds on the film. He has been great for the room. I hope, certainly, that he has grown from some of the communication and dialogue he has had with us in that room.”

On the season:

“[This year] is not over. I think that’s what I’d say right now at this point. Again, it’s been a tough little stretch. We’re not sitting where we hoped to be sitting after 11 games, but I think that’s something to look at — when the finality comes on this season, then you can kind of look at all those things. Right now, I’m fighting, scrapping and clawing to play better and to help us as opposed to putting us in bad or tough situations. I think that’s more of the focus now than the big picture from my career standpoint.”

On tough stretches:

“I don’t know if I’ve had a two-game stretch. You all would be better to know the numbers than I would. I don’t know that I’ve had a two-game stretch like that, I think, in the magnitude of which they’ve come — the turnovers and how crucial they’ve been in hurting us and really with what’s been on the line for our team. Maybe no from that standpoint, but yes, I have been through rough stretches before. It’s by no means any fun. I think you can find something from it, you grow from it and you keep going. That’s what you do. I’m not the first person that has dealt with some tough things in this sport or in this position. You hate it from our team standpoint. You feel like they count on you to make these plays and you haven’t made them. As far as anybody feeling sorry for me, they shouldn’t. Like I said, I have a lot to be thankful for. I’m going to just keep going. There are a lot of worse things that could be going on than a rough two-game stretch in the football season.”



On S Derwin James Jr.:

"It'd be great [to get him back]. Him and [S Adrian] AP [Phillips] both. They both are impact players for us on defense. They bring a lot for guys to get lined up, energy and all of those things. Answering your question specifically — I think I even said this last year, it was one of those deals where this guy [James] is going to be a captain like right now. Just his presence, what he brings to the huddle and, obviously, he's a big-time player. He has a great presence and feel about him. I think guys feed off that. I look forward to seeing him. He ran around pretty well. I make no predictions. I really don't know. I'm about as tunnel-visioned as I've ever been as far as just trying to focus on playing better myself. He did look good running around the other day."

On if he will wear a glove in Denver:

"I'm not planning on it as of now. I may mix it in here the next few days in practice just in case it's cold enough to where I feel like it's affecting me negatively. I don't plan on going with it."

On blocking outside noise:

"I don't necessarily try to seek it out, but I'm also not naive to it or ignore it completely. I understand it. I know it comes with it. It's not one of those things that I'm looking for extra motivation or, 'I'll show them,' or, 'I can't believe they think that.' I get it. If I was in that locker room, I'd be upset with me, too, for some of those things. That just comes with it. That comes with the position. I understand that. Again, I'm disappointed that I haven't made some of the plays that I need to. I've also made some plays that helped us be in these games, too. It goes both ways. I'm not trying to sell that I've played well. I have not played well. The turnovers are unacceptable, but there's no lost confidence, no lost belief in myself. I don't even entertain [that]. I'm excited to go to Denver for the 17th time. Like I said, I don't take any of these for granted. When you go on the road in the division at this point in your career, you never know if it's going to be the last time you go. I'm excited to go there, play better and find a way to help us win."

On self-scouting:

"I don't think I need to [watch all the interceptions back]. I remember them all very well. Usually, you know right away whether it was one of those you shouldn't have thrown, one of those that might have gotten away from you, one of those that, 'Hey I have to throw that at that point and in this situation you have to throw it.' I very well understand all of them. I don't shy away from the direct approach of what should I have done on this play rather than try to justify. Just take care of the football and then go play. Whatever happens, happens from there."

"I definitely have looked at them and gone, 'Why the heck did I do that?' Sure, but not self-doubt because you turn on the Green Bay game you go, 'That was pretty good.' You know what I mean? That was just four weeks ago. I can pick some other stretches, some other games, other throws and other plays. There have been other bad plays in this league by guys that are a heck of a lot younger and I'm sure they're not losing it. They're still capable. Those reasons don't lead me to think anything from that standpoint."

On balancing being aggressive and taking what the defense gives:

"I think it's experience, it's playing smart and it's having a feel for it — go with you guy. All of those things are happening relatively quickly out there. It's something, as the quarterback, you're being trusted to do and make the right decision with the football. It is something that you do have to balance. Again, not that I'm trying to sell this, but I think for the most part, I've made those decisions pretty well over my lifetime. I certainly haven't done it well enough over the last couple of weeks."

