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## Chargers Week 6 Media Availability

Wednesday, October 12, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

### HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

#### **On WR Keenan Allen's injury status:**

"Keenan [Allen] will be out there at practice today. He's still day-to-day, but he'll be out there in individual [period]. We'll be able to test it out and see how things are going."

#### **On the decision-making process of Allen practicing today compared to late last week:**

"That was the plan, to not put him out there until he was ready to ramp his way back up. He's been feeling better. At least he will be able to get out there, in his helmet, and go do some football stuff."

#### **On T Trey Pipkins III's injury status:**

"Trey [Pipkins III] will practice this week. He's not going to practice today. We're going to try and take advantage of today and tomorrow to try and get him back out there, full-speed, for Friday's practice."

#### **On WR Mike Williams' impact on the offense in the absence of Allen:**

"You can't minimize it. When you lose someone as special of a player as Keenan Allen, it's hard to replicate that type of production, especially when the coverage can tilt toward a player. That's why it's been important for us to be able to run the football, stay balanced, and make sure that we force the defenses to defend everybody. We're a much better team with Mike [Williams] touches the ball and when we can get to him a lot of different ways. I think that that's what we've been able to do. He's just really playing well. He's improving. He just has to stay with it because that type of improvement leads to the results. He and [QB] Justin [Herbert] have able to really connect here and allow us to really score the ball and move the ball."

#### **On the 'difference' between Williams' performance in home games compared to away games:**

"I don't know. I can tell you that we're not trying to get him the ball any less in front of our fans [laughter]. I know that. That's just the way the receiver position is. Sometimes that's the way the game plans go. We're trying to spread the ball around and trying to be an offense where everybody touches the ball. I think that we've been really purposeful of getting Mike [Williams] touches, particularly early in the game. Hopefully, we can continue to do that."

#### **On the increase in called blitzes earlier in the season:**

"I think you're just trying to take advantage of your people. Do you have people that can rush? What does the rush do for other people? Do you have people that can cover? All of those things factor into whether you're going to do it or not. There are a lot of factors in to that. I feel like it's been effective for us this year. Again, each week has a life of its own, but I think that we have the personnel to be able to do that, for sure."

**On a 'discrepancy' in expected points added when blitzing and when not blitzing:**

"I think that the design, when you're pressuring, is did you get the matchups that you were looking for? Then, if you get beat, what happened with the football? Are you willing to live with that? Outside of the touchdown against Kansas City — that's one that stands out to me, which we should have been in a different rotation. When you're designing pressure, are you getting the matchups you want? In the rush and the coverage, do you like those matchups? It's kind of process over result. We're only five games into the season, but from our standpoint, the design of the pressure, was that intended? Did that work? Did we like our coverage matchups? Then, work from there. I do think that it's something that is going to help us, moving forward."

**On Broncos OLB Bradley Chubb and preparing G/T Jamaree Salyer for the matchup:**

"He has coaches that are going to be breaking those guys down. Every week, I'm trying to insert myself where I can with players and specific matchups. I love doing it on the offensive side of the ball, especially because I'm so familiar with a lot of the defensive players in the league and structures and stuff like that. I really love that part about being a head coach. Jamaree [Salyer] is one of those students of the game. I think that's why you've seen him play well. Then, he has really good coaches. [Offensive Line Coach] Brendan Nugent and [Assistant Offensive Line Coach] Shaun Sarrett, those guys, to me, are as good as any tandem in the league. Then, [Offensive Coordinator] Joe Lombardi, obviously, leading the way. The other good thing for Jamaree is that he also has another coach, [T] Rashawn Slater, who is helping him out, too — [C] Corey [Linsley] and [T] Trey [Pipkins III], who have played a lot. What we try to do with guys like him, that are new to the NFL, is use everyone's experience to help them out."

**On the offensive line's performance thus far this season:**

"It's just been a team effort. It starts with that premise, that it takes a team effort to play like that. It's not just the O-line, it's their coaches, it's the skill players around them, it's the protection plan, it's the run game plan. Things take time, and I think that for us, up front, early in the season, it's just taken some time for those guys to play together, to get into rhythm together, but I think that you've seen, over the last couple of weeks, us play really quality football on the road. That's also a factor, when you have a group that can go on the road and play like that. We're excited. We have to keep improving."

**On the EDGE production on the opposite side of OLB Khalil Mack:**

"I think that those guys are all combining to try and pick up the slack, and, certainly, to get the production. I think that they all can give us something that is going to give us an edge. I think that when you take a look at Khalil [Mack], we don't want him to have to shoulder more and play more. Then, as the season goes on, then he wears down. We want to use those four guys to really play, and that's what we're doing. In terms of rushing the passer, in the Houston game, I thought that all four of those guys were outstanding. Last week, in terms of just pass-rush production, they didn't get to rush a lot in that game. It was just a bloody run game and they didn't get very many opportunities. That's what happens in a game like that, when you don't get the lead early — and then, the run game, for them, is working — you don't get very many chances to rush. I think that that group last week just had to play a tough, rugged game on the edge. Hopefully, we're going to earn more opportunities to rush early in the game."

**On areas where CB J.C. Jackson 'is lagging':**

"I think that J.C. just needs to get into his comfort zone, play in his technique and play his game. I think that sometimes it's hard for people to understand that when you go to a new scheme, when you've kind of made your name in a new scheme — you've been in the same system, the same location, you've been hearing something the same way for four years or five years — and then you transition, there's all this transition that happens. I think that you've seen it with quarterbacks in the league. You see [Buccaneers QB] Tom Brady go through a new system, you see [Packers QB] Aaron Rodgers go through a new system, and there's time that it takes to feel like yourself, the person that you're used to being. I think that's just normal. What we're trying to do is get that transition sped up as quickly as we can. Like I mentioned to you, I think that four weeks being out, that's a factor, obviously, but it's our job, as coaches, and the players around him, to get him back just playing his game. I think that when he's playing his game, as you guys have seen throughout training camp, and in a lot of stretches this year, he's the right guy to be coaching. We're excited to keep coaching him. Looking forward to seeing the best of him, for sure."

**On details of Jackson's transition:**

"Just hearing a different language, a little bit. Him getting used to the way of doing things. But we brought him here to do what he does best. We're not trying to change him, that's for sure. It's just him getting out there with his teammates, him getting into rhythm, and playing his game."

**On CB Bryce Callahan's performance thus far this season:**

"I think that Bryce [Callahan] is playing like he always has, which is just steady, productive. I think that he has been a real bright spot for our defense. He's been so consistent through five games. He's been able to go toe-to-toe. I think that you saw the stats, the metrics of his coverage ability, and when he has been in coverage, what the completion percentage has been, and stuff like that. He's having an excellent year. That's how he's played. He's just brought that veteran presence. In today's NFL, when you play five DBs, your star is as important of a position as there is. Certainly glad to have him."

**On the Broncos:**

"I see a team that easily could be 5-0, real easily could be 5-0. They've played a good schedule early on. That's what I see. I see an offense that has a lot of weapons. When you start with their quarterback [Broncos QB Russell Wilson], he's a guy that I've had to face several times and a guy that has as good of a resumé as you can find. He has so much experience. He has seen and played in so many big games. He's going through that transition right now, too, of going to a new team, but he's still the same player, in terms of being dangerous every snap. He's a guy that is as tough of a cover as you're going to go against. At receiver, they have an outstanding receiving corps; [Broncos WR Courtland] Sutton, [Broncos WR Jerry] Jeudy, [Broncos WR KJ] Hamler. Those guys are really tough to cover. It's really unfortunate that they lost the back, [Broncos RB] Javonte Williams, because he's an outstanding player, but [Broncos RB] Melvin Gordon is a lead back in this league, always has been. Then, on the offensive line, they've had to make some adjustments, but they have a good line. What you see through these first five games is they move the ball and that they're very dangerous because they have a lot of pieces that can get you explosions, that can score the ball for you. They have our full attention, that's for sure."

**On the Broncos' 'slow start' to the season:**

"I know this, where [Broncos Head Coach] Nathaniel Hackett came from, they were one of the top redzone scoring offenses in the world. When I was with the Rams, they were about ready to set a record, in 2020. [Broncos QB] Russell [Wilson] has been as good of a redzone quarterback as anybody in pro football over his career. I know that they have the stuff to do it, it's just early in the season. I think that they're making their improvements, too. They're very dangerous, though. I think that that's what we look at our film, that it may not have happened yet, but it is all there to happen, so we have to make sure that we're ready."

**On 'why scoring is down across the league through the first five weeks':**

"It could just be injuries early in the season, where I think people are working through a lot of different things. It seems to be that way. Maybe it's just because there's so much more media coverage, but it just seems like there are a lot of people in transition with their team. I think that when you factor in the preseason, people are playing less than the preseason, and then you get at the beginning of the season, and then you have some transition on your team. It can be challenging. That's why I talk about the discovery phase. I don't use that as a coaching phrase to make it feel better, I think it's descriptive of what is actually happening. I think that's what you're seeing. Then, once these groups join up, and they get their, quote-unquote, identity, then you'll see it get back up because the fact is that the players are good enough. Sometimes you just have to play together more, and then the scoring will move up."

**On the offense's redzone production:**

“Just start with last week; we had the two penalties that set us back. I thought that we were off to a good start down there. Then, you can see what those penalties do, they get you into third-and-long down there. I thought we had a lot of good stuff up in the plan. I love the red-area touchdown that [RB] Joshua [Kelley] had running the football. Then, the screen to [RB] Austin [Ekeler]. You have to make sure that down there in the red area, that you make them defend the width of the field. That’s what we’re trying to do. We’re trying to activate all of those play calls, all of those personnel groupings that can get the matchups down there. Last week, it certainly wasn’t good enough for us. We were two-for-five down there. If you score down there, you can see what it does to the game. As you saw last week on defense, when you can get a redzone takeaway, what that does for your team. It’s an area that field that we practice a lot. At the beginning of the season, you’re still trying to figure it out. I know that last year, if you go back to last year, we got off to a slower start in redzone, and then we really heated up because you figure it out — you know who you have, and then you go attack. I know that we have the chops to be as good as anybody in pro football, offensively. I thought that those penalties really hurt us last week.”