



QUOTES

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Wednesday, November 14, 2018 | Hoag Performance Center | Costa Mesa, Calif.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR KEN WHISENHUNT

On using T Joe Barksdale and T Sam Tevi at right tackle:

"You know, it's been working pretty good for us. Sam's done a pretty good job in pass protection as well. I think, to Joe's credit, he's worked hard to get back, and he's playing pretty good, so I imagine we'll have a rotation. It will probably be pretty close to what it's been. We'll see how it goes. We've got to kind of see how the game's rolling."

On Broncos OLB Bradley Chubb:

"He's a good player. I mean, just in hearing all the hype last year with him coming out, you didn't really know what — because obvious you don't look at a lot of defensive players. You could see when you were looking at other players on tape, but he's strong — a good physical player, good rush, good rush technique. So he's really doing a nice job for them."

On DE Joey Bosa:

"I was wondering if it was going to be in the first couple of questions. You know what? No kidding aside, I don't look at it that much when the defense is on the field doing their thing. Usually we're working and correcting some of the things we've had. It was nice to see Joey back on the field. Human nature though, I did watch him a couple of times. Just from what little bit I saw, he looked good. Whenever you have a player of his caliber that has missed some time, it's always good to see him back on the field. I think just seeing the excitement on his face for being out there because I know it was tough for him. So as far as any of the other stuff, it's good to see Joey back out there on the field."

On what Bosa's return to practice means:

"Well, gosh, I think anytime you have a tremendous player that comes back that can play, it helps your team, you know. I mean, you give credit to our players, they've been working hard and they've done a great job just of how they've worked this year. So, you know, you would think that if Joey comes back and plays, it can only help us, which is a good thing."

On the Denver pass rush:

"Well, there's no question. Your plan has to change a little bit when you face a team like this because they do have four [pass rushers]. There are times when they have all four of them on the field at once — but it's not like you're getting a break if either [Bradley] Chubb or [Broncos OLB Von] Miller has to take a break. So I think you have to be aware of those kind of things, whether you can get help from a back or help from a tight end. It certainly changes your approach a little bit in how you do it. It's a credit to them. They're good football players. They run a good scheme. They're a well-coached team. They certainly have really smart guys in the back end. [Broncos CB] Chris Harris [Jr.] and their linebackers have been there together and they communicate really well. So it's a tough challenge. You can throw everything else out the window. When you play this team, it's a good defense. They've got some good edge rushers, which is always a tough thing for offenses. They play their scheme really well. All you can do is try to draw off things that you've done in the past that maybe have worked or maybe you've helped protect the quarterback, and try to implement those things."

On Broncos CB Chris Harris Jr.

"I think he's playing at a high level this year. You know, you don't pay much attention to players on other teams a lot of times, but I've always admired Chris and how he plays. He plays the game the way a pro [should] — which you like to see in pros, and he does a nice job. It just seems to me that he's playing really well. I don't know him, but I respect the way he plays. He's smart, he's a very good technician, and he plays that position very well."

On the balance of the offense:

"To be honest with you, I don't really pay a lot of attention to [individual streaks that players are on]. It feels good that we're getting a lot of guys doing a lot of things. It's a credit more to our guys. If you're in this thing long enough, you're going to have years where you're good passing, you're going to have years where you're good rushing — but to be able to balance it, it's been really good just to see [RB] Austin [Ekeler] and [RB] Melvin [Gordon III] in the run game get some opportunities. Then even our receivers are contributing with that, with some of the jet-sweep runs that we've done. [QB] Philip [Rivers] has always played at a high level when I've been around him, and he's doing that again. You know, the challenge is to keep it going, that's it. This will be a real test against this defense."

On WR Mike Williams:

"I think every week we're trying to get them all involved. Sometimes it's just the way the game goes, whether they get those opportunities. So we're really happy with Mike and how he's progressing — but we're really happy with [WR] Tyrell [Williams], we're really happy with [WR] Keenan [Allen], we're really happy with [RB] Austin [Ekeler]. When you start talking about all those guys — last week, [TE] Virgil [Green] contributed a little bit. So I think maybe when you do it that way, it helps contribute to your balance, which hopefully that can continue. So we do try to put things in that we think this could go to Mike. This could go to these different players. Sometimes you don't get the right look. Last week, and I said this, I guess I haven't talked to you guys, but Oakland played us a little bit differently than they did. They weren't going to give up any of the shots down the field. So they played some two high and tried to stop that from happening. Sometimes when you do that, you have to take the other thing [that's available]. So it's just the way it works sometimes."

On if there are shutdown corners in the league still:

"Well, I mean, there are some good corners in this league, no question about it. When you go up against one of those guys, which you see every week, you see good corners. I don't know what your definition of a shutdown corner is. I think that guys that play with good technique that are competitive every play, that you're saying, 'Okay, we can't count on necessarily a one-on-one winning this match-up.' You know, there are a lot of those guys in this league. That's part of this league. So that's what makes this league great, but, I mean, things have a way of going in cycles. Passing is hot right now. It could slow down in a couple weeks. You just never know. We're just trying to focus on keeping what we're doing going."

On RBs Melvin Gordon III and Austin Ekeler:

"Well, it seems kind of the way the NFL's going now. It seems like it's a back-by-committee type thing. The challenge is always finding the other back. I think to your point, Austin's versatility has really been tremendous. We do a lot of different things with him and he's really performed well for us. He's even a tremendous special teams player, so there's no question that's been a big help for us, and obviously for Melvin, too — but you've got to give credit to Melvin, he's playing like crazy right now. He's doing a great job."

On pre-snap motion of wide receivers:

"Yeah, it's more than we've used it in the past. I mean, we've done it before. I think we've just kind of — just like anything, you've expanded on what you've done. We had an offseason where we knew more about some of our players and we tried to work some of those things in through OTAs and through camp. Then, you know, sometimes you take a chance on a guy. Like Keenan [Allen], he rips off a 20-plus yard run on the first play against Seattle a couple weeks ago in that situation. So that helps you. Those kind of things help you. So it's definitely you see more of that in the league now. Just like, and I said this a couple days ago, RPOs were the rage last year. You don't see maybe as many of those. So you've got to try to use it while it's good, because those defenses are so good they figure it out and figure out ways to stop it. So, yeah, there's probably a little bit more of it, ask we've certainly benefited from it."

On how jet-sweeps affect offensive linemen:

"You know, different teams have different ways of doing it and I don't know if it's necessarily a function of your linemen. I think the big thing is trying to adapt what you do to the players that you have and how that fits. So, I mean, certainly there are different ways to skin a cat. I don't know."

On if C Mike Pouncey was the team's largest free agent acquisition:

"Well, you know, it would be hard to argue that. You hate to say he's the biggest or the best, but he's a tremendous player, and he's done a really good job for us. [T] Russell Okung is a tremendous player, and he was a great acquisition for us [last year]. You know, [General Manager] Tom [Telesco] and his staff have done a great job of getting in some players that have helped us. I mean, the thing about [WR] Tyrell [Williams], he was an undrafted free agent. Austin [Ekeler] was an undrafted free agent, and those guys have become tremendous players for us. So to me, I think it's the sum of the parts more than the individual. I think there is no doubt that Mike contributed a tremendous amount to that. You know, his leadership, his play, his attitude, all of it has been great."

On if Pouncey is like a second quarterback on the field:

"I'm sure Mike would like to think that. I'm sure he would like to think he's a quarterback, but he's a smart guy. You just see his passion in the game. Really to me, it's more about how you interact with your teammates, and he's tremendous."

On the good ball security this year:

"Well, I mean, you've got to give credit to [Head] Coach [Anthony] Lynn there. That's been big for him since he came in here and he's preached that since last year. You know, it's been good. I hate to mention it or even talk about it because, you know, I'm superstitious about that stuff, but it's been good, no question."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR GUS BRADLEY**Opening Statement:**

"Okay, looking at the Broncos offensively, I think you start off with the run game. The three backs they utilize, the three back they have in the game, they all have unique styles but they all jump out. They're a team that's second average per rush in the league. So here we go again, another really, really talented running team. Then the passing game, the receivers they have on the perimeter, [Broncos WRs Emmanuel] Sanders and [Courtland] Sutton, I think those guys jump out at you as well. This is a big challenge for us. I think this jumps out at our team because when you look at explosive plays they've had in the running game, those plays really jump out. You can see the speed and balance that these backs play with. So it's a great challenge for us."

On DE Joey Bosa practicing yesterday:

"It's great. You know, he's been in the building the whole time, so [he was] in the meetings, but to actually see him out on the practice field [was good]. I think for us, it's just kind of we'll see. He comes out, and I think of it, as in [my conversations with Joey], this is just the next step for him. Okay, you've worked your tail off to this step, now let's get some reps on the practice field. I think we just handle it day-to-day to see how he feels and how he goes."

On how Bosa looked in practice:

"Just for the limited reps that he got, he looked pretty good. I think the big thing is, 'Okay, how do you feel.' Like I said, it's more of a wait and see and how he handles each day."

On the plan for Bosa in Thursday's practice:

"I don't know what exactly [Head Athletic Trainer] Damon [Mitchell] has set up for him. We'll get involved with [Defensive Line Coach] Giff [Smith], we have a plan for him, I don't know how many reps, I don't know the actual number. It's more that he's done all this and the next step is to get on the field. So we're excited to get him back on the field and we'll see where it goes."

On Bosa's emotions being back on the practice field:

"I think any player loves to be with his teammates and the ability to compete again. So I'm sure he wished he could go faster. He's so competitive and he wants to be with his teammates. I think that we've just got to follow the procedure that's set up for him."

On the defense's success sacking opposing quarterbacks:

"I think a big part of that is the players. They've picked up. A lot of times when you don't have a player, someone's got to step up the. We always talk in terms of the story that's taking place in front of us. Some story is going to come through this whole thing. One player that maybe you didn't expect to do well, did well. There is always that type of a story. So I think it's more of that that, 'Hey, you know what, we lose Joey for a period of time. We've got to have players step up.' We'll try to do the best we can. Put guys in position to make plays, but it still comes back to the players getting it done."

On if there will be an adjustment when Bosa returns to the lineup:

"Well, I think that's what we're talking about with Joey, it's really day-to-day. So in our minds, we're just going about the way we always go about it and approach it. When they come to me and say he's ready, we'll go from there — but right now it's like another part of his rehab. He's coming back and getting some reps on the field."

On if the pass rushing scheme will change when Bosa returns:

"I think when that time comes, we'll look at it. I mean, each week is so different with how we try to attack protections and things like that. First and second down and third down, I think if you look at it. There's been a variety of guys that have come on pressures and different zone schemes that we have. So that's more week-to-week."

On the expectations this season without Bosa:

"Well, you never know how it's going to turn out. I think as a coaching staff, we looked at it and said, 'Alright, here's the situation we're in right now. How do we best utilize guys and put them in position?' Each game is different. How much success you have pressuring the quarterback depends a lot on your rush and tight coverage in the back end. So if we're getting any pressure up front, you know, there is a big portion that goes to the credit in the back end because it does work together. You know, the tighter coverage you can play, the more time that the rush can get there, so they work hand in hand."

On if Bosa has done any team periods in practice:

"No, he's done some individual. I think he's, you know, as far as today, whether he'll get out there in some team reps we'll decide that after he came in from the walk through."

On integrating an injured pass rusher back into the defense:

"Well, when that time comes, I think for Joey [Bosa] it comes pretty natural to him. So every situation is different, you know. I think it's just gaining confidence and where he has trust where he is. It really is kind of wait and see, you know. I wish I could tell you more, but I say, 'Alright, he passed this step, here's the next step. Okay. That's great.' I'm happy for him. I'm excited that he's on the field and with his teammates. We're more just going about each day until they come in and say, 'Hey, he's cleared these steps, and, you know, he's ready to go.' Then we'll go, but I think for him it's just exciting to see him back on the field and with his teammates and going through that next step of his rehab."

On losing LB Denzel Perryman for the rest of the season:

"Well, [Linebackers Coach] Richard Smith has done a really good job — and it comes back to, we've had this conversation prior about moving people around. You know, a guy like [S] Derwin James played multiple positions. In OTAs and training camp, the linebackers played multiple positions for situations like this that may occur. We have the flexibility to try to get the best three guys on the field when we're in base. So that's what we're looking at right now. Fortunately, we have guys that have played multiple positions, and I guess we'll see who is in and who is not."

On if S Derwin James would play inside or outside as a linebacker:

"Derwin? Well, in our nickel package, he plays both. He plays inside and outside. He has yet to play inside in base."

On DE Melvin Ingram III:

"Well, Melvin's made a lot of plays for us. Just, as far as last week was classic [Melvin], you know, where he had a sack-caused fumble. So he has stepped up. Where I think he's really improved too is in the run game. I think that was a point that we really brought up to him, 'Hey, we love your rush. You're getting better there. Your effort's outstanding, but the run game is, you know, to take the next step.' I think that's where he's shown up. Where he's done a nice job for us in the run game."

On if he spoke to Ingram about ways to improve before the season:

"No, I didn't. I wish I could say yes, I did, and look what happened. No. I think for him, our guys really — it's just here's the guys that are out there, and let's go. You know, I think that's what I appreciate about this group is that they know multiple positions, and there's a lot of trust, I think. I feel it. I feel like there's a lot of trust from the players and that's what's great. Hey, we're going to do this and move these people around, and then they're like, let's go, you know. 'Make the call, Gus, and we'll bring the call to life.' You know, it's that simple. So it's nothing spectacular from that part. I think at times it's just more consistently where we're playing faster."

On LB Uchenna Nwosu:

"Yeah, I think as a rusher we felt like he was coming along and wanted to get him more opportunities as a LEO. It's time to get our best rushers on the field at the same time. Now Giff [Smith] does a good job of rotating in a critical time in the game. We had [NT Damion] D-Square and [DT Darius] Philon, and there were other guys out there. Melvin [Ingram] wasn't out there at times, but the rotation of those guys keeps them fresh. I think that's a big part of it too. We have seven or eight up, all of them are going to play. I think it keeps them fresher in those pass-rush situations."

On CB Michael Davis:

"Well, I think the big part is that he caught our eye right away because of his length and speed. Where he did not catch our eye is his [lack of] being a willing tackler. You know, I think that he would try to tackle, but I think that's what held him back from being a guy that we felt like could get on the field consistently. To his credit, I think he identified that was his weakness and really attacked it. Now, it's cool to see because in games, [Linebackers] Coach [Richard] Smith will point out multiple times where he comes up and has really good tackles, driving for speed — and so to see the evolution of him, I think that's been a big part. Now just on the perimeter making plays, winning the 50-50 ball — you have to do that on the perimeter and our defense. So I think that's where his improvement consistently gets better."

On how playing special teams last season helped Davis' tackling:

"That's where it caught our eye, when he made plays on special teams tackling. We thought we need to take a little stronger look at him."

On if Davis' physical skillset is similar to 49ers CB Richard Sherman:

"I would say different. I would say different. You know, Sherm was a very instinctive player and had played a lot of football. Even though he played as wide receiver, it came to him easier. Michael is gaining that understanding. I think his skillset is unique though, Michael, because he is so fast, and he's got some length. So it's kind of a cool project for [Defensive Backs Coach Ron] Milo [Milus] just to see and develop him and see where this actually goes. You know, he's playing pretty well."

On the run defense:

"You know, I know they said, 'Hey, on the fake punt, that counts as rushing.' Well, that happens. To me, I don't look at that. I think it's more of a feel. How are we doing consistently? You know, if you're averaging under four yards-per-carry in the league as a defense, that's pretty good. I think you rank pretty high. I don't even know where we are right now. I look at it as, how have we been consistently in the past couple weeks, and I see our fits. I think we're playing much better than we were last year, and I think that's a credit to the defensive line and the linebackers. Our defensive line is two-gapping better, they're using their hands, their separation of blocks. I think that part of the fundamental process is better than it was last year. So I see it each week we improve. Now this week, it's a big challenge for us. Big challenge."

On containing opposing rushing attacks:

"I think every style is different. In Tennessee, they had two different styles of running backs. So it still comes back to the big point for us is points. You know, the way to do that is you eliminate explosive plays in the run and in the pass game. That's been our big challenge. I thought up until the bye week we weren't very good in that area. Now the last couple weeks has been better, but the points — keeping points off the board is one of our top priorities. To do that, you try to limit the run. Don't let that run game get going. With that, if there's more passes, then the chance of getting a third-and-10 pop up, or we can get our rush going, and they kind of work hand-in-hand."

On Broncos RB Phillip Lindsay:

"Very fast. [He's a] guy that you would think would just attack the perimeter in their run schemes, but he'll run inside the tackles. So, it just happens so much faster with him, just a normal stretch play, by the time he gets the hand off and gets to the second level, there is a different speed than maybe what we've seen up until this point."