



## QUOTES

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### **LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH ANTHONY LYNN**

#### **Opening Statement:**

"I tell you what, this is not your typical 1-3 team. This team could be at least 3-1 right now coming off their best game last week. The offense is moving the ball well. They have a lot of weapons. It just looked like this team was coming together, which doesn't surprise me under [Raiders Head Coach] Jon [Gruden]. Jon and I are close friends, and we talked a lot while he was out [of coaching]. I've known him for a while. He's a heck of a coach and this is going to be one of our biggest challenges of the year, I believe."

#### **On Raiders RB Marshawn Lynch:**

"He looks better this year than he looked two, three years ago. You know, he sat out in 2016, came back last year and was a little rusty — but he's in rare form right now. He's just a very unsatisfied runner."

#### **On if he enjoys the challenge of facing good coaches:**

"Absolutely I enjoy that challenge. The competition with the coaches, players, absolutely."

#### **On signing P Donnie Jones:**

"I told you I was looking at the whole process — snapper, holder, kicker. We just felt like we needed to make a move at that position."

#### **On how Oakland is different from last season:**

"Well, from what I saw just last week, they're clicking on all cylinders offensively. They have weapons everywhere. [Raiders WR Amari] Cooper had a heck of a game. [Raiders WR Jordy] Nelson had a good game, Marshawn [Lynch] went for over 100 [rushing yards]. Jon [Gruden] is an offensive guy and I think the offense has performed well."

#### **On the chemistry between kicker and holder:**

"Sometimes it's just chemistry between the two guys, you know? [Former P] Drew [Kaser] is an outstanding punter. It was a hard cut, but when you look at the big picture his job is also to hold. We just wanted to change the whole dynamic right there with the holder and the kicker and make an extra point."

#### **On Donnie Jones' history with K Caleb Sturgis:**

"You know, we brought in a couple of guys. We just thought that Donnie performed the best."

#### **On LS Mike Windt:**

"Mike's a veteran guy. As far as I know, he hasn't had a bad snap since he's been here. I would rather have a veteran guy going down the stretch to be the snapper, to be honest with you. You know, everybody's positioned. The whole operation, if it doesn't improve, it will continue to change."

#### **On his relationship with Raiders Head Coach Jon Gruden:**

"You know, he used to come to New York all the time because he was really good friends with Bill Callahan, a good friend of mine that I coached with. He'd stay for a week or two at a time, and we just hit it off. We'd talk ball, we'd get on the board, do scheme. We gave him a lot of good advice, lot of pointers. While he was out and away from the game, he was never out of the game. He's been studying the whole game the whole time. He's prepared, he's ready to come back and I'm sure he wants to win another championship. You know, you would think, yeah, I'd be picking his brain, but he'd always try to pick my brain. It's just the way he is. He's always learning, he's always evolving."

#### **On if he was surprised that Gruden returned to coaching:**

"No, it didn't surprise me at all. It was just a matter of time."

**On T Russell Okung and T Joe Barksdale:**

"Joe's questionable. He ran around for a little bit today. I wouldn't expect him to play this week, but he's getting close. Russell will probably be a game-time decision."

**On DT Corey Liuget:**

"He was playing so well before he left and took his little break. Just having him back, have him defend the run, get a little push up the middle — it may take some pressure off the outside pass rushers."

**LOS ANGELES CHARGERS OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR KEN WHISENHUNT**

**On how injuries on the offensive line affect the offense:**

"Well, we got through the game last week with the guys, and they did a pretty good job. So I just think in certain situations you've got to try to help them out as much as you can, so you have a plan to prepare that way and see. You know, this team can create situations for one-on-one matchups where there's not a lot you can do. You've just got to be able to block those guys, so the balance becomes trying to make sure you can protect yourself as much as you can. It helps having a quarterback like Philip [Rivers] because he obviously can do a lot of different things that can help that. That's all part of the plan as we work the week, and we'll see where those guys lineup at the end of the week."

**How QB Philip Rivers helps inexperienced linemen:**

"Just being able to handle if it's a check or if it's something that he sees zone, getting us to the right play or protection. Those are the kind of things where it can make a difference."

**On T Trent Scott:**

"He's going to get a lot of reps, but he's been getting reps before. I think the one thing that sticks out about Trent is it doesn't seem too big for him. He's come a long way from Grambling to here, undrafted free agent — and credit to him, he's done a nice job. We still feel good about having other guys that could potentially go into that position, like [G] Michael Schofield [III] played that last year and did a nice job with it. You don't want to make wholesale changes on the line, but you think you can do those kind of things if you need to."

**On if it was a consideration to play G Michael Schofield III at right tackle:**

"There are a lot of things that have been in consideration. When your two tackles are out, you have to make some adjustments. Our guys have done a good job with that and hopefully, it will help us this week."

**On keeping the chemistry of the offensive line despite injuries:**

"You know what? I think these guys, when you talk about pure chemistry, they have chemistry now. They've been working together for all of training camp and are four games in. I think they have a good understanding of how they operate and can work together. The only thing that you're lacking is playing a different position, but guys do that every week. You have to do that in this game with the way it is. When you have the active number that you have on game day and you only have so many guys, they have to be prepared to do that, and that's part of it."

**On QB Philip Rivers after running a quarterback sneak:**

"You know, that's a good question. I don't think how he's feeling about it ever really factored into that. I think the element of surprise was more [the consideration]. So of all the fourth down plays that you have that you think are going to be successful, just because nobody was expecting that, we thought it might have a chance. So that was pretty good. You know, I think it had been a long time. It was definitely a surprise, but, no, we felt good about it. We felt good about the guys up front. Like you said, and I agree with you, he felt good about it too."

**On if Rivers suggested the sneak:**

"No, he didn't suggest it, but I don't think he would have had a problem suggesting it, he just didn't think that way. He thought [the coaches] would shut [him] down, so it was good."

**On Rivers' history against Oakland:**

"I think divisional games — for us, always — you get up for those games because we've had some contested battles with all the teams in our division. Obviously, Kansas City got the best of us the last few years, but there's been a lot of giving and take between us and Oakland. You know, I think I don't want to put words in other guy's mouths, but I think we have a lot of respect for that team and the players that are on it. Just like last year, the first game came down to the wire in Oakland. We always kind of feel it's going to be that way. I know that there's a long history between the Raiders and Chargers, so there is a little bit of excitement just from that, you know."

**On the blocking of wide receivers:**

"One of the things that we talked about leading back to camp is how unselfish the group of receivers were. You know, a lot of times that was correlated to being a decoy in a route or maybe not getting the ball, but still working. I think, really this is a great example of that. It's more than just that. To be able to ask them to do some of the things that we do in the run game, to block and then to do it, especially with — who knows, sometimes they can get matched up on a bigger guy, but no complaints. They work hard at it and it has definitely helped us in the run game. I think it's a credit to them. The guys up front are doing a good job. The tight ends, obviously, and the backs, full backs, but it really helps when you have a group of guys like that."

**On RB Melvin Gordon III improving in yards after contact:**

"Since I've been with Mel, he has gotten better and better and better — and that's what you want to see out of a talented young football player. He's really done a great job as a receiver and really been a factor to make huge plays for us. From what I've seen of him — 2016 was my first year with him — and I always thought he was a good runner. He was very successful early in that season, especially in red zone carries. I think he was leading the league in touchdowns for a little while. So I think he has been driven to get his game to another level, and I think we're seeing the benefit to that. He's worked hard. He's studied it. I saw him out there today when we were going through the walkthrough working on his footwork on a certain run. [He] just wanted to make sure in his mind he had it, knew what he wanted to do and how he wanted to hit the play. That's what see from a real professional, especially one of those guys that really is a good player in this league."

**On RB Austin Ekeler and WR Mike Williams having a reduced role this past Sunday:**

"That happens in games. We talked about this earlier in the year. You don't ever know who it's going to be, who it's going to come down to this week. [WR] Tyrell [Williams] had some huge plays for us this past week. I think that's one of the things that's helped us be a little more effective is that it's not just one guy. You know? It's, 'Hey, it may come to you, it may not.' We had a number of things that we wanted to go to both Mike and Austin, but, you know, over the course of the game and in the progressions of how you're doing it, it just doesn't seem to work out. So once again, I think it goes back to our guys being unselfish because it would be easy to be frustrated, but I think they see the bigger picture of playing together and being happy for each other. So we always, within our structure of our plan, have things in for them, but you can never control for sure where it's going to go."

**On if Gordon's comfortability with his running style has helped his yards after contact:**

"You know what? I haven't really thought about it. You know, I'm sure there have been backs in the league where that's uncharacteristic of what you're saying. Like I said, I think Melvin has really worked at it. Once again, it's a credit to him. There is no question he's a talented player — regardless of anything else, he's a very talented football player — but I think he wants to be recognized as one of the better backs in the league, and he's worked hard at it. Take your hat off to him."

**On Gordon and Ekeler performing well as a running back duo:**

"In my years in the league, I've had a few running backs that have been pretty good. We had Jerome Bettis and the fast Willie Parker in Pittsburgh, which was a pretty good combo. So, not to take anything away from Austin and Melvin, obviously, but who knows [how the season progresses]. We're at the quarter point. We've still got a lot of games left. It can all change. I think we're just pleased with the way our entire group is working together."

**On how Ekeler compares to former Steelers RB Willie Parker with their receiving abilities:**

"Well, he's had it for a couple of weeks he's had a couple of big carries out of the backfield. You know, you can't compare. They're different players, [playing at] different times. There's no question that I do agree with you, Austin's speed is something that you notice. He has really worked hard at all the little things that he's had to improve as a free agent coming in here. Gosh, he's created a role for himself. Every time we put him in a different spot and asked him to do something, he's found a way to be successful — whether it's a touchdown pass on the third down where he beat the linebacker. You know, he did something like that last year in the Thursday game against the Cowboys. So just to see him continue to grow and make some plays like that, you just get really excited about it."

**On how Gordon's physicality energizes the offense:**

"Well, I'm going to tell you what, we came out in the second half — I think it was the second half because we move on [to the next game] — but when [WR] Tyrell [Williams] made that catch and on the very next run, Melvin had that one where it didn't seem like anybody could tackle him. You know, that really does energize your team when you see that. It's like, 'Holy cow.' Guys make those kind of plays. So they get excited when they see Melvin make some of the runs that he's made. Hopefully we can just continue that."

**On Trent Scott:**

"You don't know a lot about him because of where he came from and being an undrafted free agent. The thing that stood out to me was he was a heavy guy, had good hands. You never expected him to be at this point. It just goes to show you — and that's what's great about this league, you know — a guy like that that you don't expect that has worked hard, and all of a sudden, he gets in and he plays. I mean, wow, that's crazy. It's also exciting because he's shown, I guess it goes back to what I said earlier about it, just doesn't seem to be too big for him. He's done a good job."

**LOS ANGELES CHARGERS QUARTERBACK PHILIP RIVERS****On facing Oakland this week:**

"I think it's, again, because of the division. I think the Raiders, Chiefs or Broncos always carries a little more weight. Being in the division and playing twice a year, we know how much those games mean. So, yeah, it's a big game. This team got their first win last week, they could be sitting there 4-0 or 3-1. It's a good football team. So we know we have a challenge ahead of us to find a way to get one."

**On if there is a reason for his historical success against Oakland:**

"I don't think so. I don't think so. Shoot, you want to, again, against those division teams, you want to play well against those, and hopefully have a good record against those guys. They've had different defenses and different coaches and things over the last 15 years, so I don't think there's anything to a certain scheme or anything like that, but hopefully we keep it going."

**On the environment of a Chargers-Raiders game:**

"I think when I first got out here, I learned quickly kind of, the Chargers-Raiders game, what it meant. I think the longer you're in, it's more just because of a division opponent. I don't know that there's necessarily that Raiders hatred or anything like that. You know, in high school and college, I think it's a little different. I think Chiefs, Broncos, Raiders because of it being in the division, it is what it is. I know being both of us being in California, that probably adds to it a little bit as well, and how fans up and down the whole coast are kind of intertwined. You run into Raiders fans all over, and Chargers fans all over. So that kind of California pride of whose team is who's."

**On Raiders DE Bruce Irvin:**

"Yeah, he played well against the run and the pass. He's a guy that's had a solid career in his time in Seattle and Oakland both. He's an every-down player. He's on the field. He hardly ever comes out. He can rush the passer, but he also plays the run very well. He's a productive player."

**On Raiders Head Coach Jon Gruden:**

"Obviously, you saw quickly the energy that it brought nationally as well, with him getting back into coaching. We've only played against his team once, I think I've gone against his team one time. You can see kind of the energy that they kind of recreated with him being back there. Again, I don't get too much caught up in records ever really throughout the season, but especially early. It's early. We've been 1-3, and 0-4, and plenty of times we felt like we were a good football team, and I know that's what we're going to get coming in here on Sunday."

**On if he gets excited going up against an elite coach:**

"Not necessarily. I always have great respect for him as a coach, and getting to visit with him numerous times when he was, you know, in the broadcast booth of those production meetings and things and just talking football. I've always enjoyed that. I respect him from afar. Got to know him a little bit like I said. I don't think personally it adds anything to it, but it will be good to look across and see him over there."

**On the quarterback sneak:**

"Yeah, it's been a long time, which was good. It was good to do that. There will be more of that, maybe. It's never anything I've necessarily been against. It's just kind of the way things come up, and we've been a good short-yardage team. It's either been full backs or doing some other things. We had to look last week going into the week of prep that we felt looked good and went for it."

**On if Week 5 can be a springboard for the team like last season:**

"Yeah, we need to be. I certainly think we're a totally different team than last year. We're at a different point, sitting 2-2. I think just playing a little better all the way around. A little more complementary all the way around, but certainly, you know, this is no time — like I said on Sunday — to keep going win-loss, win-loss, win-loss. So it's an opportunity for us to get our second win in a row and get above .500 and keep going."

**On his performance this season:**

"You know, I feel like I've been playing pretty well, but again, like you all know it comes down to winning. So we've done it half the time thus far. So it hasn't been good enough in two games and it's been good enough in the other two. I do feel like we as an offense, and individually, I feel like I'm playing pretty well. When you look at it, we need to get better on third down, get better in the red zone. We are doing a pretty good job protecting the football. There are tons of areas to improve. Again, it's about winning, so we need to do that more, but I do think our balance and some of the production in certain areas has been very balanced and efficient, and hopefully we can just keep getting better. Keep certain things where they are, and keep improving in some other areas, we can be great. We're not great right now, but we can be, and we've just got to keep working."

**On T Trent Scott:**

"I think his quiet confidence [is something you notice]. He's a guy that comes in here as a free agent. Trent's from pretty much from the same old town there in North Alabama. Played against his high school, [but] obviously a different decade. Just his quiet confidence, his demeanor was never too big for him. You felt that. He just went about his business, just steady. Then it kind of became, you know, who is this guy? You know, a little bit. Slowly, we said that about other guys over the years. It was just, 'Gosh, this guy has a little something to him.' Then you look up, and he's playing a whole half of football last week and doing a nice job. If he's called on again, he'll have a whole week of preparation this week to be ready. So, yeah, he's a guy that we thought highly of from the start, and gradually he's earned that confidence and respect from his teammates. As a young player, obviously, he has tons of room to improve, as he would tell you, but it's been impressive to see him progress."