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Chargers Week 13 Media Availability

Wednesday, November 30, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On an injury update regarding WR Mike Williams:

"Mike [Williams] is progressing. He's still day-to-day. I think that we're trying to get him out there on the practice field at some point this week, but day-to-day right now."

On injury updates regarding C Corey Linsley and T Trey Pipkins III:

"Corey [Linsley] is in the concussion protocol. Trey [Pipkins III] is day-to-day with his MCL injury."

On if Pipkins will return to practice at all this week:

"We're shooting for it, but we're going to be careful with it. He's been a pure example of toughness for us. We just want to make sure that we get that thing a lot of rest. It's that point of the year where you're going to try and do that anyway. Have to try and get that thing back."

On if the team is 'changing up the practice routine at all this week':

"We're going to do walk-through into the practice on Thursday to just get the guys out a little bit sooner for the day. Same amount of practice, but getting them out sooner."

On if the team has 'changed walk-through timing':

"No, not yet."

On being flexed into *Sunday Night Football* in Week 14 and how that game time impacts the schedule with the time of the game:

"The game that we're playing this week is a day game, so that's the one that we are going to focus on."

On an injury update regarding S Nasir Adderley:

"Nasir [Adderley] is day-to-day with his thumb."

On a 'recovery timeline' update regarding OLB Joey Bosa:

"Joey [Bosa] is at the same point. He's progressing well. He's in the building. It's been good to see him. Still going to be some time before he is out there at practice."

On if there is a 'week expectation' for when Bosa will return to practice:

"No expectation. Keep making progress. When that moment comes, we'll be ready for him."

On if Bosa's return 'could be contingent on where the team is in the postseason race':

"I don't think so. I don't think that is his mindset, or ours. He's making good progress. We'll see when he gets back out there. We're going to make sure that he is ready to go, though, and be the Joey [Bosa] that we know he is."

On C Will Clapp's performance this season at center:

"Exemplary from a backup center. That's why we went and got him. The familiarity with [Offensive Coordinator] Joe [Lombardi] and [Offensive Line Coach] Brendan [Nugent] was really significant. Then, much like a backup quarterback is, I think that relationship with the starting center is very important, the relationship with the quarterbacks. He has a great way about him. He's come in and played quality football for us and given us an opportunity to win a bunch of games. We're glad that we have him. One of those underrated offseason signings for our football team."

On the Raiders' rushing offense:

"They know how to run the ball. They have an identity. They have tight ends who can block, which makes the running game go a lot better. They have an elite runner that breaks a lot of tackles. You can't block everything perfectly, you have to have running backs that can create on their own. [Raiders RB] Josh [Jacobs] is as good as anybody at that because he can make you miss and he can run through you. He's a very dangerous player. They've really established a consistency in that phase. He's leaving the NFL right now. Last week was a good example of why they've been playing well, offensively."

On 'points of emphasis' to the defense this week when preparing for the Raiders' rushing offense:

"Strike blocks. Pursue the football. Tackle. Do it consistently, down in and down out."

On the defensive line's performance over the last few weeks:

"I love the guys that we're coaching. I think the guys that we've joined up with — [DL] Tyeler Davison, we've had [DL] Joe [Gaziano] and [DL] Breiden [Fehoko] before, but I think that those guys have fit right in. I thought, last week, all three of them played well for us in that game. They're the right type of guys that you want when all of this type of stuff happens. You have to have players that you can count on, that you can depend on. All three of those guys that really fit in well to our football team. I like coaching them, for sure."

On how the Raiders have developed since the Week 1 matchup:

"We have a lot of players, on my list here, that weren't even on our team in that game. That's just how the NFL is. Both teams have changed significantly since that first game. That's how the NFL is. It's what you do in that space to improve. I think both of these teams are in a similar space, where we feel like we can improve a lot down the stretch. It's going to be a big game because they're playing well, and so are we."

On the Raiders 'currently being in a make-or-break situation':

"It's just how it is in the second half of the season in the NFL, but this is a quality team. We knew that the first game that we played them. You can see it in their record. You look closer to that record and how the games have actually been played, I think they've lost six games by one score or less. You know that this is a dangerous team from the first time we played them, and they're still a dangerous team. They're very well-coached. They have a lot of high-quality personnel, a lot of experience. It's a division road game, so we're going to have to be at our best. Much like that first game, we have full respect for them."

On if last year's Week 18 game at Las Vegas 'will have any impact on Sunday':

"I'm not going to speak for anybody else, I'll just speak for myself, but, no, it will have zero impact on the game."

On potential options for better defending the run:

“There’s going to be some designed scheme that gets to the perimeter. If it gets there, you don’t want it to come down to one guy. If you study the NFL and where a lot of the explosive plays happen, it happens when a very good running back is on a DB. What you try to do is create as much population to the football so that doesn’t happen. That’s what I mean by two-on-ones, the pursuit. That’s why you have to strike blocks and get off blocks. Sometimes, you can fit the run perfectly, but, if that design gets it to one guy, maybe it can go a long way if you miss that tackle. That’s why it’s important that not only you fit it well, but you get multiple people at the point of attack. If there is a miss, you can correct it. That’s just run defense one-on-one in the NFL. I’m not telling you anything that any other defensive coach wouldn’t tell you. Run defense is a team operation. That’s what’s lost. Sometimes think that run game is about just the front. Well, it’s not. Just like on offense, they say, ‘OK, sacks are just about the O-line.’ Well, it’s not. It’s about your quarterback, it’s about your protection plan. There are a whole bunch of things. Football is such a great team game that way. You guys cover it every single day. Hopefully, there’s a reason why coaches tell you that, because it’s true. You can’t get bored of people telling you that because that’s the way it is, and run defense is no exception.”

On what QB Justin Herbert ‘can do to help avoid sacks’:

“Staying out of known passing situations. When you’re on the road, it’s loud and you’re playing against quality rushers, you multiply your chances of putting yourself at risk. A lot of designer groupings that are going to rushing the quarterback and covering pressures, that gets amplified when, number one, you are behind or behind the chains — third and long. Just staying ahead of the chains, getting a lead, playing with good pace. Then, obviously, everyone is working together from a protection plan, receivers running the routes on time. There is no one better than Justin [Hebert] at protecting the football, feeling the rush. It hasn’t happened to him as much, but, sometimes, it is good to take a sack in the NFL. Sometimes, it’s good to take a sack and be protected with the football instead of forcing something to happen that is not there. Each sack has a story and you have to make sure you look at it. I just think the one thing that Justin has proven is that he is an outstanding decision-maker and that he’s really strong with the ball. I think, although we have had nine sacks, we have had zero fumbles. That is important, to be strong with the football. That’s how you win games in the league is protecting the football and taking it away. We have done a good job of that and we’ll keep working hard at protecting the passer.”

On the Raiders’ defense:

“They have a lot of good personnel. [Raiders DE] Chandler [Jones] and [Raiders DE] Maxx [Crosby] are really good. I have a lot of respect for [Raiders DT] Bilal Nichols, who I coached in Chicago. He’s really good inside. [Raiders LB] Denzel Perryman, who was here, is a Pro Bowl player. I think he’s an outstanding inside linebacker. Then, they have some quality secondary players. [Raiders CB] Rock Ya-Sin, one of my good friends coached him in Indianapolis. [Raiders S] Tre’von Moehrig is a very good, up-and-coming young safety. We have a lot of respect for him. They have good personnel. They have been banged up. They are very well coached. [Raiders Defensive Coordinator] Patrick Graham is an outstanding coach. We have full respect for them. It has been tough every time we have played against Patrick [Graham] and his scheme. The first game was a tough one against them. Led by Maxx [Crosby] and Chandler [Jones], those guys are as good as it gets.”

On ‘how closely’ he has been monitoring USC Head Coach Lincoln Riley and the USC football team this season:

“I haven’t been monitoring much of college football, at all.”

On S Derwin James Jr.:

“He’s doing the job of six other players. If you just said that one player is doing that job, you would have an expectation, but he is doing the job of six other players. That is what makes him so valuable. Mentally, there is a huge tax in understanding what to do and how to do it. Then, you have to understand what is going on on the other side of the ball and that implication in six other roles. Then, you get into the situational part of it — first and second down, third down, red area, two-minute — you are really asking this guy to do a lot, and that is what makes him so unique. Last week, I thought that was a great example of how special he is because you saw him play the ball in the deep part of the field. It was the first time he has gotten on the board, from an interception standpoint. He has been close several times this year, but he is that rare guy that can do it all. He can rush, he can play the run, he can play in zone, cover man-to-man. In the slot, he can match up on guys. He is the heartbeat of our team. I say it all the time, but last week was a signature play because it’s him on [Cardinals WR DeAndre] Hopkins and Hopkins is as good of a receiver as there is in the pros. Derwin was able to knock that one down for us. You need those signature plays in big games like that to give you the energy, give you the lift. You have heard me say that, but your premium players in this league, they have to make premium plays for you because it really ignites your football team.”

On if James Jr. is a ‘stats stuffer’:

“When I was with [Rams DB] Jalen [Ramsey], I felt similar. He is like that LeBron James-type of player where he can just do everything. The thing that makes LeBron so unique is that he plays all five positions, and he plays them all at a premium level. He can do everything at the highest level that you could ask anybody to do — point guard, two guard, scoring, three-point, guard any position, post-up game, transition. You name it, LeBron can do it. That is something that is rare with Derwin [James Jr.], and that’s why everyone reveres him that way because everyone knows that there are not many people that can do that. He is still improving. That is the thing, sometimes, with players like him is that he still has a lot of capacity to grow, and that is what we are focusing on with him is all of the little things that he can get better at, that can help his game and make even more plays and get even more trigger out of him. That is what we’re searching for. [Defensive Coordinator] Renaldo [Hill] and [Secondary Coach] Derrick [Ansley] and [Assistant Secondary Coach] Tom [Donatelli] are doing such a good job. We expect him to continue to play well for us.”

On P JK Scott and ‘if he would put him in the category of being a key offseason player’:

“I certainly would. Definitely a weapon. I think he has just changed the way our special teams has operated just in terms of the confidence that you have in field position. You understand the hidden yardage that is available to you when you can punt the football like we have and how that affects scoring the football. When you can change the field like he has, I think he has given our rookie gunners a ton of confidence because he gives them time to do their job well. His operation time gives our protection, it takes stress off of them. He has to continue to improve. He’s another guy that is a young player in the league. He has to continue to improve for us, but definitely has been a big asset for us this year.”

On how Scott ‘has affected fourth-down calls in the plus-side of the field’:

“I think it has an impact. I think that and your defense. I think both of those things go into it. When you know that it’s not going to go into the end zone — because you know what that reality is when you punt it and it goes into the end zone, you know what you just lost. When you have full confidence that it’s going to get inside the 10 [-yard line], the 15 [-yard line], you know what that does for the flow of the game. You know what that does for the other team. It has definitely played a factor into it, but I think it has been one of those things that it has allowed us to be a more complete football team. That was our whole goal coming into the season, was being a more complete team. Our special teams is continuing to improve. It’s nowhere near where it’s going to be, but we’re heading in the right direction.”

On 'how much of an emphasis he is putting on trying to score more touchdowns in the third quarter':

"Huge because it changes the momentum of the game. Just like a couple of these recent games where we come out and score the ball early, and what that does for your team. When you come out and score the ball, then it completely changes the feeling of the team. The emphasis is going to continue to be on the explosions, staying away from negative plays, and when you get into the red area, converting your opportunities. You have to score touchdowns. We are working hard as a group. Our offense has done a really good job, I think, of staying together this season. I thought last week's game was a good example of that, working through some adjustments. That's what I want to see, as a coach. I want to see those in-game adjustments that mean a lot. I thought, last week, we did a good job of that, but we have to continue to start fast in both halves, for sure. Good points."