



QUOTES

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OFFSEASON PROGRAM PHASE 2 MEDIA AVAILABILITY

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LOS ANGELES CHARGERS OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR KEN WHISENHUNT

On first day of offseason practice:

"Well, we've been with them for two weeks in the meeting room, so you've gotten over that you hadn't seen them in a while and getting back together. It's always good to go out on the field. That's where we do most of our work. The excitement from them is always good. You can feed off that. Just to get together as a group out there on the field is pretty good."

On the draft:

"[Defensive Coordinator] Gus [Bradley], I don't know what he's done. He must be paying [General Manager] Tom [Telesco] off on the side or something. It's two years in a row — but I think that we have a number of guys offensively that have been here. We feel good about where we are. I think that, evaluating — I know there were a number of different guys that they talked with us about during the draft. You just never know how it's going to fall. I think one of the things that has been really good about our team is that we've had guys step up, make plays and develop like [T] Sam Tevi was a sixth-round pick and he's played pretty well for us. You look at [Raiders WR] Tyrell [Williams] — we lost him in free agency this year, but he was an undrafted free agent that came in here and [was] productive. I feel really good about the two [offensive] guys that we got. We're excited to see how they progress, but we're also excited to see [who's already here]. We have a number of young guys like [G] Forrest Lamp, like [WR] Dylan [Cantrell], like [WRs] Justice Liggins and Artavis [Scott] that have been here that we are excited about seeing how those guys do as well."

On WR Artavis Scott:

"Hopefully, he's a little bit more mature in the league. He's not an older player, but when you have a young guy like that who wants to try to prove himself and do some things, that's really what it's all about when you're not drafted like he was. He was making strides at that. He's been around it, he understands how we operate now. He understands where he can fit in from a standpoint of expectations of whether he can play all of the different spots and what he can do. Now, it's just a question of showing us that — which he was doing last year before he got injured. I'm really excited to see how he progresses this spring."

On QB Easton Stick:

"Obviously, he wasn't one of the guys that we looked at early because you looked at some of the top four or five guys that came off the board because there was a lot of hype or their grades were higher. We saw him, because you go through and evaluate them, it stood out — some of the things that he did in the pocket, some of the ways that he handled the line of scrimmage. Some of the things that they do, which is a more conventional offense as opposed to some of the spread offenses that you see in college football now, and how he handled that was pretty impressive. He was good in the pocket. He could move around. He could throw from the pocket. He did a nice job with his play-actions. He was accurate with his throws and made some good throws down the field. Obviously, he made some plays where he extended them, whether it was moving out of the pocket or running with the ball. It's really hard to ignore — what, 49-3 [record] over three years? It's very impressive. We had him in here for one of the 30 visits. I think we saw him throw, but we had seen him throw. Bringing him in here and talking about football, it was really good."

On if Stick could be used similarly as Saints QB Taysom Hill:

"I don't know. I think what is important to us right now is to see where he can advance or how he can advance as a quarterback. I think you have to do that before you think about something like the role that you're talking about. It's hard to think that you're just going to plug somebody into that role and think he can do it without really learning the basics of having to play quarterback. If he does [play a hybrid role], how does he fit in the active [and inactive] game day picture? There are a lot of those things to consider. He's an athlete. He does a lot of good things athletically on the field, which you can see him do, but we are excited to see him play the quarterback position and see how he can develop at that."

On how Stick compares to Eagles QB Carson Wentz:

"It's funny, we went in there a couple of years ago and talked to Carson. We were very impressed with him and Easton [Stick] was the same way. I think they do a great job there at North Dakota State with their program and how they coach these young men. Their success, obviously, shows that. The quality that he showed from the standpoint of preparation, what he understood football-wise, talking about all of the different things you have to do at this level — we sent him a packet with some things and when he came in, we quizzed him on it. We did something a little bit different this time. Usually, we'll ask them specific questions about plays in the packet. This time, we just said, 'Draw everything that you can remember.' Usually, it's about three plays — three pass plays and a couple of runs. [Stick] was very impressive. It's still on the board in there, the three plays that he drew up and how detailed they were. For a college football player having to learn something that's a little bit different than what he's done, put the time in and come back without any notice and be able to put it back up on the board was really impressive."

On QB Philip Rivers' 16th season:

"Wow, if he can improve off of last year, it will be a really good year. One of the things that, really, I think was good last year was that he worked very hard in the offseason. Even when he wasn't here with us, in this part of it, doing core work, getting in shape and I think it really paid off. I think he did a great job of that during camp. You could see it with the way he was throwing. It looks the same way this year. He looked really good. Today, seeing him out there on the field and seeing him run around — I think, when you get up to that point, the 16th year or later in your career, those are the things that you really have to focus on. I think we have to do a job of making sure that we don't put too many things on him in practice. When you get into the grind of it, you always want certain routes, you want to make sure you get a look at it. You get it with the receiver and you work those things. Those are always important, but he's so competitive that he wants to take all of the reps in practice. Even, especially in training camp and preseason games — I think [Head] Coach [Anthony] Lynn has already talked about that. I think he has the right perspective on making sure that we take care of that so that we can keep him the way he is right now. He looks really good. Hopefully, we can replicate what we had last year."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS WIDE RECEIVER KEENAN ALLEN**On beginning phase two of the offseason program:**

"It feels good just to be back out there with the team as an offensive unit, calling plays and running around together. It feels good."

On the focus for him this offseason:

"Same goals, it's the same plan. For me, to play all 16 [regular-season] games."

On the wide receivers room without Raiders WR Tyrell Williams:

"I think the younger guys, they're still the same guys that we had. We're just missing Tyrell. [WR] Mike [Williams] is going to come in, [WR Travis] Trav [Benjamin], [WR Jeremy] Germ [Davis], [WR] Artavis [Scott] is going to step up, [WR Andre] Dre [Patton]. All of the guys that we had, we just have to raise their level up."

On the depth of the receivers:

"We have big talent. Artavis [Scott] played with Mike Williams, I think he has the record at Clemson for [career] receptions and yards and stuff like that. [WR Justice] Liggs [Liggins], he's a great player. He runs great routes. He kind of reminds me of myself with just the way he can move and stuff like that. Andre Patton, the same way. He's a bigger guy, 6-3 or 6-4 and he can move as well. You have Jeremy Davis, he's been playing with us and stepping in, filling roles like last year when we get tired or somebody is hurt, Jeremy came in and he plays special teams."

On moving on from last season:

"It took a little bit of time because of the way we lost. It was definitely dominating on their end and definitely not how we wanted to end the season. It just felt like we could have played a lot better as far as executing and making plays. I've taken that into my offseason workouts just trying to get stronger and better so that I'm not as fatigued as I was — even though we did have the travel however many times we did. It didn't matter. It's just so I can get my mindset right and get my body ready."

On Raiders WR Tyrell Williams:

"It was great just to see him get a big deal and get what he deserved. It sucks that he's still going to be the No. 2 receiver behind [Raiders WR] Antonio Brown, but he can definitely be that No. 1 guy. Hopefully, he can just continue to play his role."

On if the draft brought up memories for him:

"Besides being mad? No. It was a great day, I got drafted on my birthday, so [Saturday] was my birthday. Hats off to the guys that did get drafted. Good luck to them."

On any advice to the incoming rookies:

"Play with a chip on your shoulder. A lot of teams passed up on you no matter where you got drafted besides [Cardinals QB] Kyler [Murray]. Good luck to him, too."

On the Chargers draft:

"It was great. [We addressed] two spots that I thought we needed work and hopefully the depth can be there this year and not have our safeties playing linebacker. It was big to pick up linebackers so that we can play against the run like we've seen. It was good."

On his belief that he is the best receiver in football:

"It's just what I do every day, day-in and day-out. Every game, you're going to get the same me. I don't do a lot of complaining about getting the ball. I'm going to play my role. I'm going to let my guys eat. I'm going to do what I can to get my guys open, too. I draw a lot of attention from the defense and still am productive the way I am."

On playing all 16 games in each of the last two years:

"Yeah, offseason training, definitely. I'm just focusing more on my craft. I would say having my priorities straight. My babies probably have a lot to do with that. It's just having everything focused."

On if WR Travis Benjamin has more of a chip on his shoulder this year:

"Yeah, most definitely. Travis has been working hard this offseason. We were working together, actually pretty much the whole offseason besides when he went to Florida. You can just tell that he's hungry. He's ready to get back to what he was going in Cleveland and the first year he was here. He's ready."

On TE Hunter Henry:

"It's major [to have him]. He's another weapon and another great blocker for us. He does a lot of great things that you don't see as well. Just having his presence and his knowledge will take a lot of attention for the defense as well."

On what aspects of his training he as focused on:

"Probably my strength. I've been doing a little bit more in the weight room. I feel like I always say that, but I've definitely been doing a lot more in the weight room just trying to get bigger and stronger so that I can fight these guys late in the season."

On having a son:

"I think it's great, just having a little me. Not that I don't — the other two are me, too. Just having a boy me is definitely going to change the way I do things I think."

On QB Philip Rivers:

"I feel like he always looks the same. Ever since I've been here, he always approaches it the same. He hasn't missed OTAs. He is still the same leader that he was. I feel like his communication level has gotten better with me — we talk all the time now. Even when he was just away for vacation, we kept in communication. That part of that leadership goes a long way, knowing somebody will fight for you."

On how long Rivers could keep playing:

"At this point, as long as he wants to. We keep getting better at the offensive line and they keep protecting him, all he has to do is throw it."

On QB Tyrod Taylor:

"It's been great [working with him]. He has a great arm and is a great guy. I have cookouts at my house for the guys and he comes through. He's just a great guy to be around. I think he's great for the locker room."

On WR Mike Williams:

"He draws attention, too. He can go deep. He's just big about catching the ball. He's that [Texans WR] DeAndre Hopkins-type of guy. If you throw it up, he's going to get it. No matter what it is, no matter what the coverage looks like, he's just that hungry. That's just how he's been."

On what receivers try to work on in this phase of workouts:

“Just pretty much getting back into the groove of it. Hearing the play call, knowing where to line up, knowing what everybody has to do. That’s pretty much the main thing in our offense, knowing everybody’s role — not just Z, not just X, not just F. You have to know all three just because [Philip] Phil [Rivers], he can change it up at any time. We can be in any formation and he can change the play. If you know everything, then you can go out there and play without thinking.”

On the team camaraderie:

“That’s why it’s big for everybody to be at OTAs. You’re able to build that camaraderie right now, see who can fight, see who can’t fight, see who’s going to give up on you. We’re just trying to change that culture now and hold everybody accountable.”

On the offseason for the Kansas City Chiefs:

“Do I have thoughts on it? No. Since you asked, it was brought up today in the locker room. We just looked at their DB group.”

On the importance of winning the division:

“No doubt. It’s on our minds. We knew how important it was last year. We came up short.”

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS LINEBACKER THOMAS DAVIS SR.

On the importance these next few weeks:

“It’s very important. We have a good group of guys here. We’re out here installing and it’s a very important time for a lot of guys and especially for myself being one of the newer guys on this team. Being able to get out there and understand how things work. Understand the basic, fundamentals of this defense. This is a great phase and a great time for us to really come together.”

On adapting to his new teammates:

“I’ve adapted well. I knew a bunch of guys coming in but just really being able to get in here and spend time in the weight room with these guys and spend time in the meeting room and really learning the guys personalities. This is a great team, a great organization. I’m still really excited to be here and really looking forward to the possibilities of how much we can grow as a football team.”

On if it was apparent how close this team was in the locker room:

“It was very apparent. Even on the outside looking in you could tell this was a tight-knit group. For me, I think, coming in and being part of it, they’ve definitely welcomed me with open arms and I’m just trying to offer as much as I can to the younger guys on defense. Just come in, find my place and contribute.”

On if it still feels strange that he’s not with Carolina:

“Initially, when I first signed, it was different. You don’t spend 14 years in one place and not expect change to be different. I’m definitely welcoming the difference and the change and embracing it. I’m really looking forward to coming in and just being a really good player. So many people on the outside doubted me, the team that I was with doubted me, so I’m definitely happy the Chargers organization has given me this opportunity and I’m not going to let them down.”

On the moves the Chargers made during the draft:

“I think it was key. When you look at some of the areas of needs from last season and you look at some of the guys that were lost in the offseason, I think the draft was huge for us as a football team. Really, just like free agency, it’s all about getting those guys in, adapting them to what’s going on around here and just allowing them to understand what the culture is. Once they understand and realize that and get everybody working towards the same goal, this can be a really special football team as long as everyone buys in.”

On Head Coach Anthony Lynn, Defensive Coordinator Gus Bradley and Linebackers Coach Richard Smith:

“Those guys are A-1. I feel like they’re a group of guys that shoot it to you straight. I know Coach Smith from having him in Carolina. He’s never going to sugar coat anything for you. Coach Smith is straight to the point. Getting to know Coach Bradley, he’s the same way. Coach Lynn is a direct model. Those guys were definitely made for each other. When you see them and how they work, they’re philosophy and their understanding of how things work. They do a great job of conveying it to the players and what you see is what you get with them.”

On learning the terminology of a new defense:

“Anytime you’re on the same defense for eight or nine years and you come into a new defense it’s definitely going to be a little difficult understanding the terminology, but football is football. Cover-3 is cover-3. Cover-2 is cover-2. Man is man. It’s all about understanding how to grasp the terminology and being able to communicate it to your teammates and understand the communication that’s given to you.”

On QB Philip Rivers yelling at him while he was practicing:

“Same old Philip. Nothing’s changed. When you’re competing with him on another team, he’s hollering at you. When you’re on the team with him, he’s still going to holler at you. It’s going to be fun. I did that a lot in Carolina with [Panthers QB] Cam [Newton]. We went back and forth a lot in practice. I feel like when you’re doing that, it raises your level of play because when you talk trash, you have to be competing at a high level. It just raises everyone’s level of play and with us being able to do that it should be fun.”

On if trash talking gives him more juice:

“It definitely gives me more juice because I can’t go out there and talk trash to him if I’m not backing it up.”

On if this team will be outspoken about Super Bowl aspirations:

“That’s one thing that I’ve learned after playing in the Super Bowl in 2015. You can’t really live off of what happened the year before because we came back the next season, in Carolina, and we didn’t make the playoffs. It’s all about building and coming together as quickly as you possibly can as a football team for the next year. You want to look back at some of the things you did the year before and build on that but understand and know that year is behind. It’s not just going to happen. Teams are ready for you. They know how good this team was last year so they’re going to give you their best week-in and week-out. We have to be prepared for that as a football team and understand that every week we’re going to get that team’s best, so we have to give them ours.”

On if Rivers’ presence factored into his decision to come to the Chargers:

“I think this overall roster factored into that decision. When you think about having a potential Hall of Fame quarterback leading the way, that just sweetens the load. Knowing that you have a guy that’s a proven winner and since he came into this league has produced at a high level and always had his team in playoff contention every year. You definitely want to become a part of that and help contribute in any way possible. That was my mindset. Joining a roster that’s full of Pro Bowl players, a roster that’s full of guys that have a ton of potential and coming in offering the veteran leadership that you can offer. Any kind of wisdom or anything that can be asked upon you as a veteran player you want to give that back to the younger guys and I feel like that’s one of the reasons that I’m here.”

On the draft having more of an emphasis on speed:

“That’s the way of this league. It’s becoming a more passing league. You don’t really see teams lining up in 21 personnel and pounding the ball right at you. You must adapt as a football team, as organizations to the way of the game. The game is trending towards becoming more passing so you have to get guys that can cover the pass or you’re going to be left behind. They started that trend probably five or six years ago as you see guys that are getting drafted that are faster and more coverage type linebackers.”

On memories from his draft in 2005:

“2005 was so long ago. You keep dating me right now. What’s really interesting is to look back the 2005 draft and look at some of the rosters and see how many guys are left in the league. To know that I’m the only defensive player left, that kind of makes me feel a little special but then it’s kind of like, dang man, that’s kind of old. It’s cool. It’s something that I’ve definitely embraced but I want to make sure that coming in it’s not that, oh you’re a charity case. I’m coming in to compete. I’m coming in to offer everything that I can, not only as a veteran with wisdom but as a guy that can still play this game at a high level. That’s my mindset. I want to compete for everything that happens on the field and we’ll let the chips fall where they may.”

On a sense of pride being the only defensive drafted player left from the 2005 draft:

“It’s a lot of pride because in 2011 I didn’t even think that I would play football again after tearing my ACL for the third time consecutively. There were a lot of people that told me I should quit football. I should walk away and if I wanted to be able to play with my kids one day after the game was over that I should walk away from football — but good thing I didn’t listen to those people. Good thing I had an owner in Carolina that believed in me, that gave me another opportunity and I’m still about to play the game at a high level because of that reason.”