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## DALLAS COWBOYS vs. LOS ANGELES CHARGERS POSTGAME TRANSCRIPTS

Saturday, August 20, 2022 ⚡ SoFi Stadium ⚡ Inglewood, Calif.

### LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

#### **On his takeaways from the game:**

“It was a really poor first half for us, about as poorly as you can play, and that really put us behind, overall. I didn’t like the way that that first half felt or looked. It was really in all three phases. When you have two turnovers and you give up two special teams touchdowns, that’s the way the score is going to look. In the second half, we played better, so I was glad that we responded well. We’ll learn a lot from this tape, for sure.”

#### **On his level of disappointment in the special teams coverage units:**

“I think I was disappointed because that’s not the way we practiced this week. That’s not the way that those guys performed in practice. To come out there and play that way, they’re going to learn a lot from that. They’re going to learn that the entire NFL is watching, and we’re watching the entire NFL, and that’s why these games are important when you’re playing. You need to make sure that you perform or else we’ll find someone else who can. I think that there will be a lot of people that learn a lot from this tonight.”

#### **On an injury update for RB Isaiah Spiller:**

“Just an ankle. We don’t know the severity of it, but it should not be anything serious.”

#### **On Spiller ‘tweaking something in the scrimmage’ and ‘if tonight’s injury was related to that’:**

“It is not. Separate.”

#### **On an injury update for DB Deane Leonard:**

“Just of the soft-tissue nature.”

#### **On the ‘short-yardage and red-zone defense’:**

“I thought we defended just fine tonight. It’s hard to really evaluate our defense after you give up that many points on special teams and your offense turns the ball over twice. We responded to the first one well. The second one, before the half, I wish we would have been able to knock that one out. But our guys competed hard. I felt like we, defensively, certainly, played well enough to win.”

#### **On QB Easton Stick’s performance:**

“Easton was up and down. I think that he would like to check that ball down on the first interception. There was a two-[safety] deep zone. I think that if he had to do it over again, he would have checked it down quicker. I feel like, in the first half, there were a lot of drops, while he was playing that would have really changed the momentum of his drives. Outside of that one throw that I wish he would have checked down, I thought he played just fine.”

**On WR Joshua Palmer's performance:**

"I thought that Josh played well tonight. I felt him tonight. I thought that on the long one on the left sideline competing for a contested catch like that, then the run-after-catch on the screen, I felt like he played really well. I felt like he had a really good week of practice against these guys. Separation, moving around, I think that he's playing with confidence, and that's why we wanted to get him in these games in the preseason — we know that he's a starting-caliber player, but I think that he can gain a lot of confidence playing with Easton [Stick] and [QB] Chase [Daniel]. I thought, tonight, that he was a real bright spot for us."

**On the running game 'having a tough time getting going':**

"It's all 11 guys, but all five running backs didn't do much tonight. I don't think any of the five of them played very well. We'll have to look at it, but just being out there on the field, I didn't think any of the five played very well tonight."

**On 'if he is concerned that the defense hasn't generated any turnovers in the preseason thus far':**

"No."

**On WR Michael Bandy's performance:**

"Michael Bandy has been a real bright spot for us in the preseason. He's a competitor. He's doing a great job being friendly to our quarterback, getting open, making big catches. He's a guy who is really taking advantage of his opportunities."

**On S Alohi Gilman not playing tonight:**

"Was precautionary with him — him and [DB] Mark Webb [Jr] — just keeping those guys safe in hopes that they can play next week. Alohi practiced well for us this week, but just wanted to make sure that nothing happens to him."

**On OLB Jamal Davis II's performance tonight and throughout training camp:**

"Jamal plays really hard. He does exactly what he's asked. He really puts his heart there on the field, and we really liked that about him. He's a tough football player. He's improving. I think coming from the CFL, there's a lot to learn, but I think that he really gives a lot to the game. We really like coaching him."

**On 'how much their operation is disrupted when the monitors go out':**

"It happens sometimes. You just have to trust your eyes on the field. We have the [Microsoft] Surfaces, so there's plenty of technology there to identify what happened, and your own two eyes are a really good place to start."

**On 'if there were any plays that he wanted to challenge or look at' that may have been impacted:**

"No. Our guys up in the box have the replay."

**On the run defense's performance tonight:**

"[OLB] Chris [Rumph II] really tried to go inside on one play and about made it, and it bounced. We missed a crack-replace outside of that run. They had 3.5 yards-per-carry, which is not great. We played the run really well for both joint practices. Tonight, they're going to get 35 runs when they're up by 19 points at halftime. You're going to defend some of that stuff. Our guys played tough on defense tonight, and like I said, those guys played well enough for us to win tonight."

## **DALLAS COWBOYS HEAD COACH MIKE MCCARTHY**

### **On WR KaVontae Turpin's performance tonight and throughout training camp:**

"He's such an exciting young player. You could see it from Day 1. Obviously, he had a very successful run there with the USFL. Really, from the first day of practice. He came in and I was really impressed with what he picked up at receiver. You could see he's dynamic in the return game. So, two excellent, big plays. Obviously, set the tempo. And just like anything else, the reaction of his teammates. I think anytime you have a new player come into your program that makes an impact like that, that's unique. That was a big lift for us."

### **On Turpin's speed and 'seeing him run down the sidelines':**

"The first jet sweep we ran, you could see he's got the speed and quickness; he has the combination of both. He's very, very comfortable in the return game. Just watching him throughout the practice, he handles the football very well, with a lot of confidence. I'm glad he's with it."

### **On S Israel Mukuamu's performance:**

"I'm so proud of Israel. Just watching him throughout the offseason — the early workouts, the four days a week being there with his teammates in the morning and then he'd come back for a second session in the afternoon. He has made a huge leap from year one to year two. I'm just so happy to see him have success. I thought he had some really impactful plays today. He's just getting better each and every opportunity."

### **On 'how being able to play a significant number of players will help with final roster cutdown':**

"It's huge. We're not looking forward to it; we know it's going to be very difficult and it's going to be extremely competitive. That's what you want on your football team and we felt that way when we put the 80-man roster together. Yes, we sat 25-plus players tonight and it gave our young guys — we're just trying to give these young guys as many reps as possible. This is what draft and develop looks like, so this is our process."

### **On returning to Dallas tonight:**

"It feels great. It's been great to be in Southern California. Obviously, we're a long way from Southern California and we've really enjoyed being here the last four days. I can't say enough about the Chargers organization, their football operation. It was great to work with them in practice, so this has been an outstanding trip for us all the way around. But, to a man, we're all ready to go home. Everybody's ready to get going."

### **On TE Jake Ferguson's performance:**

"I'll tell you what, he's such an instinctive, tough football player. That's what we really liked about him coming from Wisconsin. He has discipline. He's scrappy. He's on the edge. He's chippy. All those things. The young man can play. He's been very productive, not only at the tight end position, but also on special teams."

### **On 'cutting down' the penalties from last week:**

"Absolutely, no excuse last week, but you look at the factors involved and those are opportunities you can grow from. We took full advantage of the opportunity, but hey, I get to see these guys work every day. It's an outstanding locker room, just fully committed. If you want to the level of intensity that it takes to win in this league, week in and week out, you have to learn to play at that level of competitiveness. That's all part of the process."

### **On the decision to go for a two-point conversion:**

"The reasoning for going for a two-point conversion was for [QB] Cooper Rush. He was on a pitch count tonight. I wanted to make sure he had an opportunity."

### **On QB Will Grier's performance tonight:**

"What a great performance. He's coming off that injury, and I hope he came out okay. It looks like he might have re-aggravated it. We will have to see what the doctors say. It was a gritty performance. It was good to see him in command and run this offense. I thought he did a really nice job."

### **On the offensive line's performance tonight:**

"One thing I look for all the time is the apex of the line of scrimmage. For two weeks in a row, I thought our line was doing a good job, creating an apex consistently for the running backs. [C] Tyler Biadasz did some really nice things. He is so powerful. We want those young linemen to get a ton of reps."

**On Turpin returning kicks:**

“I think there is a great chance he will be running kicks again.”

**On the potential of starters ‘playing at all in the remainder of the preseason’:**

“We are going to work really hard on install-type of practices in the coming weeks. I like the way we have been going these last few weeks.”

**On CB Nahshon Wright’s performance tonight:**

“We need to make sure we keep it up. He is a cocky young man. I am not really concerned about it. He’s added a tremendous amount of strength. The third-down penalty, we can’t have that. He needs his opportunity.”