



Josh.Rupprecht@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Jennifer.Rojas@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Jamaal.LaFrance@chargers.nfl.com

Brock.Anderson@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Danny.Markino@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Jordan.Colquitt@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Leonie.Strehl@chargers.nfl.com

Chargers Training Camp Media Availability

Saturday, July 30, 2022 ⚡ Jack Hammett Sports Complex ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR RENALDO HILL

On developing continuity with the 'new pieces' on defense:

"Definitely happy with the progress. [Head Coach Brandon] Staley mentioned it, there are 40 new players on this whole team. Just having those new guys in here, getting acclimated to them, letting them get acclimated to us and our system, I think it's been going really well."

On the defensive unit working through individual and team drills without S Derwin James Jr.:

"We know that he is a very important piece to this. We know that there is other business that's happening. Hopefully, that gets taken care of soon, but in the meantime, I know that there are other guys out here working hard, and it's allowing them to get reps. He's staying mentally locked in when he's not in there. He's been a coach on the sideline. He's been upbeat and positive with all of the guys, so we like how that's going as well, too."

On the relationship between OLBs Khalil Mack and Joey Bosa:

"Normally, during special teams, I kind of peak my head over there. It's two edge guys putting their heads together. They're running little tidbits that they have in their game off of each other. They're growing that chemistry together. They're spending a lot of time with each other. I like how it's going so far."

On 'integrating the young players with the veterans':

"Coming in, we had a good mix of young and older guys. We always challenge our older guys to bring these guys along because we don't know at what point in the season that we're going to need these guys. They would've been putting their arms around them and they've been embracing that mentorship from those guys. The young guys, they know that it's time to work. They are seeing what it takes to be an NFL player, so they're gravitating to it fast."

On the level of competition across the defense:

"Urgency. I feel like every rep is counting. I think that, maybe, in the past, they could've looked around and said, 'Well, I don't have that guy behind me, I can correct it, but that rep may get taken away from me if you're not urgent and you keep repeating the same mistakes.' We have to be more demanding as coaches and the players have to be more demanding with their responsibilities. Having that competition, it leads to that."

On the importance of competition:

"It's everything. We know that in this league injuries happen. We need the next guy to be just as good as the guy he is replacing. On the back end, you have [CB] Michael Davis, [CB] J.C. [Jackson], you have Zant [CB Asante Samuel Jr.], you have [CB] Bryce [Callahan]; these are all quality, top starters that could be in this league. We're going to push our guys to that. Nobody knows where it is going to happen because we're not really putting a depth chart out, so they know that the reps that they get have to count."

On rookie defensive backs Ja'Sir Taylor and Deane Leonard:

"I see those guys continuing to grow every day. We're pouring a lot at them. What I'm seeing in those guys is just continuing to step up to the plate. They may get a ball caught on them here and there, but they're responding and bouncing back. That's all you want to see early on, as a coach. We know that as the playbook goes in and we stop doing the installs, things will slow down for them. I like how they're playing fast and how the moment doesn't feel too big for those guys."

On Taylor:

"He has a calmness to his game. He doesn't seem erratic about anything. He's done it in the past, so we know that would give him better knowledge than some of the other guys. And Deane [Leonard] has been typically an outside lane guy, so we wanted them to have their comfort zones with where they played in the past so that it would allow them to play fast early in camp. Then, we could adjust the reps as they go."

On CB Asante Samuel Jr. entering his second season:

"He's way more confident. He's confident in his game. A lot of times when you're that rookie and you're coming off of that rookie year where you had the Combine and then right into spring training with us, it takes a lot of your body. I think that he got a chance to let his body relax. He knew that he had to work on his body, as well. The playbook install is much easier for him, so it's allowing him to play more confidently. He looks stronger out there, as well."

On 'adding versatility' in the secondary:

"We have 17 guys [in the secondary], so it's going to be hard for those reps to get distributed. These guys know that when they're in there, this rep matters. We like that, having those types of numbers in training camp. It doesn't wear the guys down, but when they are out there, they get the chance to go full speed and not feel real fatigued with taking a ton of reps. We do get an honest look at what they're doing while they're out there."

On OLB Kyle Van Noy 'playing multiple roles':

"I think that it is going to continue what Staley said. Right now, you have [LB] Drue [Tranquill] down, and, obviously, K9 [LB Kenneth Murray Jr.] is down, so having an experienced guy behind of the ball. Knowing that we have those two edge rushers, I think that it will continue to give us multiple things to do within our structure. He's worked on the edge in the spring, so, now, it gives him a chance to play behind of the ball and see what that looks like from that lens. And, while Derwin [James Jr.] is not out there, he becomes the signal-caller a little bit. It gives us that backup advantage while Derwin is not out there right now."

On if Tranquill or Van Noy has been the primary signal-caller:

"They've both been doing it, but we've mostly been giving it to Kyle because Drue already knows the scheme from last year."

On Van Noy:

"Experienced guy. He's been around. He's even bouncing the things that he's done [at other teams] in the past that was successful there. We have an open mind here. We know that they've done a lot of good things over there, whether that was New England, or even his time at Miami, that scheme has been effective throughout. What he's done in the past, we take that in and see if it applies to what we do. He gives us a guy with experience and that knows how to win in this league, and it's great for our young guys to have a guy with that experience, and a championship pedigree, like he does."

On S Nasir Adderley's growth:

"We knew when we got Nas that he had a big engine. He can run and cover so much ground. But, that's a lot of young guys — it's like that dog that gets around and is just going fast. Now, he has a calmness to him. He understands when to use the gas and when not to. He's becoming more of a quarterback back there. With Derwin not back there, he's the main signal-caller back there. It's allowing him to express himself in this scheme. I really like what I see; it's no second-guessing. He's going to the right spots at the right time. He's looking really sharp back there."

On competition within the interior of the defensive line:

“It’s a competition. It matters what we see out here. We know that we’ve brought in a lot of guys, and they’re going to help our team, but there’s still an opportunity for those other guys who have been here to help this football team. We want to create that, and that’s what we have. We’re going to be a better team for it.”

TACKLE RASHAWN SLATER

On areas of improvement:

"I feel like I can be a lot more consistent. There were times where I felt like I was getting the job done, doing what I want to do. But, there were also a lot of times where it just could have been better as far as consistency. So, that's my biggest thing. Right now, my biggest thing is just improving every day because when we take all of this time off, things start to get rusty. So, I'm really excited for pads to come on next week and get it popping and just go."

On his level of comfort in the offense:

"I'm a bit more comfortable. I kind of see how it all works. Things are starting to slow down a little bit. So, that definitely helps just mentally knowing that I've done it before and I can do it again. So, now it's just about honing in every day and getting a little bit better every day."

On what he worked on in the offseason:

"I worked a lot on just working different angles in my sets, different techniques for different guys and a lot of core strength stuff just to make sure I can be strong on top of the rush."

On facing OLB Khalil Mack with pads on next week:

"It's going to be tough. We're barely even rushing right now in no pads and he's already put a couple of variations on some moves that I've never even seen before. I'm like, 'Wow, I've never seen anyone do that before.' He's very smart. He's very savvy. He's very powerful, too, and I haven't really seen that part of him yet just because of the nature of how it's been. So, it's going to be a lot of fun. Big challenge, though."

On OLB Khalil Mack's 'variations' of pass rushes:

"It's eye-opening. I guess it just goes to show that I thought I had seen it all last year. But no, there's a lot more for me to learn and I'm going to get a lot better going against him."

On training with T Trey Pipkins III in the offseason:

"It was good. I feel like Trey really had a great offseason. It was nice working out with him and just having one of my teammates down there because we kind of were able to talk and be like, 'Hey, when we do this, this is how it applies to our game and our system.' It was nice having Trey down there and I feel like we both had a lot of strides this offseason."

On the value of training with other tackles in the offseason:

"It is extremely valuable. Like I said, with [OLB] Khalil [Mack] busting out moves that I haven't seen before, those guys have seen that stuff and they have their own little strategies. Every tackle is kind of unique in the way they approach different kinds of players and different situations. For me, it's just like every single day, and we're going to work out physically, obviously. If I can go ask [Dolphins T] Terron [Armstead] or [New England Patriots T] Trent Brown or someone about how they look at this or how they execute that, it's just, mentally, you get it all and I really like that aspect of it."

On how Head Coach Brandon Staley 'has enforced the message of becoming more physical':

"Tempo. A lot of tempo. He wants to make sure every time we're out here, we're running around trying to beat the defense to the ball and get on them before they can even get a line. A lot of it has been tempo, but like I said, next week is going to be a big week with pads on."

On his early impressions of rookie G Zion Johnson:

"Confidence. I can tell he's got a really good head on his shoulders. Just smooth, confident, he's always looking at his playbook, watching film. He's just giving a calm energy. I can tell he's ready to go and I'm really excited to watch him play."

On if he's talked to Johnson about the challenges of being a rookie:

"A little bit. Like I said, I really don't think he needs too much of it. He seems to be doing really well so far. I told him, 'Ball is ball.' At this level, everything moves a little bit faster. Guys have different talents, a little bit quicker and stuff like that. At the end of the day, it's just like college. If you can just stay calm and trust your technique and trust what got you here. He'll be just fine."

On Offensive Line Coach Brendan Nugent:

“He’s cool. He’s really cool. He’s already introduced a lot of things that have kind of simplified things for us. He’s great.”

WIDE RECEIVER MIKE WILLIAMS

On his training camp so far:

“It’s going well. Year 6, I kind of know what to expect now. Second year in the offense, so we kind of went right into getting things going.”

On where QB Justin Herbert can improve:

“He’s pretty good [*laughter*]. We can unlock some more stuff this upcoming season. Obviously, we haven’t gotten to the playoffs or Super Bowl yet, so we’re looking forward to that.”

On if making the Super Bowl is the goal for the team this season:

“I feel like that’s always the expectation with the roster. Let’s make the playoffs, definitely this year with the added pieces we’ve got.”

On where Herbert can improve:

“Last year was his first year in this offense, so in Year 2, he’s a lot more comfortable, a lot more relaxed, a lot more vocal, knows where the spots are on the field for us. We know where we need to be for him to get us the ball. Everybody is just a lot more comfortable and everything is just running smoothly now.”

On if Herbert’s progression is ‘natural’:

“Yeah.”

On if discussions regarding goals are ‘spoken out loud’:

“We just control what we can control, and that’s us coming here every practice and getting better. We don’t try to look too far ahead. We’ve just got to keep the main thing the main thing and that’s us showing up every day trying to get better, and then the rest will happen on its own.”

On what he’s seen Herbert ‘grow and mature’:

“He’s just a lot more looser than usual. He’s just a lot more comfortable. When you come in year one, kind of shy, don’t want to talk a lot. But now, he’s kind of taken control and being himself.”

On the competition with the secondary:

“It’s been good. It’s been a lot of back and forth. It’s going to be a lot more of that during camp. Obviously, when you’ve got great players on both sides of the ball, somebody might have this day, somebody might have that day. But yeah, it’s been a lot of going back and forth.”

On if there is ‘a part of his game that he’s been working on so far’ in training camp:

“Basically everything, for real. Not just one thing in particular. For me, I’m trying to be a great receiver. So, I just have to improve in each aspect of my game.”

On facing CB J.C. Jackson:

“I’m a boundary receiver and he’s a boundary corner, so we’ve been going after it. It’s been fun.”

On how Jackson will help him prove:

“It’s going to help me a lot. Obviously, I probably won’t see anybody on the other side of me just as good as him. Going into games, I’m going to be a lot more prepared. Obviously, every corner doesn’t play the same. Every corner is good at what they do. He’s pretty good at what he does. Try to be a little physical, got good ball skills. So yeah, I’m going to be prepared if I see a DB like that.”

On his ‘biggest strength’ on the field

“I’m a big, physical receiver. I just try to use my size to an advantage.”

On Jackson’s skillset:

“I feel like every year he’s leading the DBs in interceptions, so that kind of speaks for itself. He’s got a knack for the ball when the ball is in the air, so that’s going to help me out a lot more if I get those deep shots down the field going against him, reaching at the highest point and making plays. I just have to just continue to do what I do; continue to play fast, physical and make those contested catches.”

On 'people on the outside talking about the speed of the WR group':

"That's just the outside people talking. Obviously, they see JG [WR Jalen Guyton] running by people, and I'm running by people. That's just the outside. During the combine, you see everybody running 4.2 [40-yard-dash] now."

On 'him not getting respect for his speed':

"That's from the outside. Here on the team, everybody in the organization, they know what we have. Obviously, we didn't go get anybody else because we like what we have here. That's just the outside noise. We don't really listen to that. We're comfortable with what we've got here. We put up with the guys that we have here now, so it's just going to get better."

On if the 'atmosphere in this training camp is different from what he's seen in the past':

"For sure. Over the last past years, it'll probably be like the weekends will be a lot more packed than the weekdays. But, the weekdays this year have been kind of packed, also. We've just have to keep bringing energy for the fans."

On WR DeAndre Carter:

"He's been good. He knows how to run routes. He knows how to find those spots to get into, twitchy fast. It's been good just to add him too."

On TE Gerald Everett:

"He's hard to tackle. Just watching him in the past, he catches for two yards, and then he breaks a lot of tackles and takes it for 20 yards. That's going to add a lot of explosiveness to our offense."