



***Kansas City Chiefs vs. Los Angeles Chargers
Sunday, September 26, 2021
Game 3
Chargers Head Coach Brandon Staley***



Q: What does this win mean?

STALEY: "I thought this was a team win for us. I think that is what it means. This team is a team you have to beat in the league. They are one of them that has certainly stood the test of time. They are one of the elite teams in the league. To be able to go on the road, that is what you are hoping for as a team is to go on the road and play your brand of ball. I felt like this was an outstanding team win in all three phases. For us, it was a resilient win against a quality team and that is really what it means for me. You want to measure yourself against a team that you really respect, and we have a lot of respect for them."

Q: On the pass interference call, were you going to go for it on fourth down?

STALEY: "Yes, we were really going to go for that one. We certainly didn't want to get pushed back, but it felt like that was the direction that we wanted. We wanted to put the ball in Justin Herbert's hands and have him be the decider. That is what I felt like was best for the game. I felt like where we were at in the game with the wind, which had a lot to do with the kicking game today, I felt like putting the ball in Justin's hands was the right decision. He certainly came through for us today."

Q: On the fourth down decision in the fourth quarter, how big of a role did wind play?

STALEY: "It was part of it. I felt like our offense was in rhythm. I felt like we really needed to get the momentum of the game back and keep their offense off the field. I think it was a combination of factors, but I felt confident in where we were offensively with our matchups outside. It was a tough wind here. It was cutting across the field. I just felt like for both guys it was difficult to kick in. I wanted to put the ball in our offense's hands. Those guys came through today."

Q: Can you say Justin Herbert was the best player on the field today?

STALEY: "Yes, I felt like Justin was the best player on the field and I think Mike Williams was right there with him. I thought that those two guys really stood out to me. Justin had four touchdowns, no interceptions. There was a fierce rush out there. I felt like he really played the position how you need to. I felt like he was patient when he needed to be. We had a couple play action shots that didn't quite express themselves. I felt like he was awesome in the check down game getting the ball underneath. They played a lot more two deep zone coverage with some of their corner situation. He just played the position as a high level. He showed high level toughness and then certainly in a two minute drill, the big throw to Keenan Allen and then finishing off with Mike (Williams). You can't say enough about Mike Williams. I felt like this guy all year through three games, this guy played fantastic and he came through for us today."

Q: How do you look at the team's aggressiveness today?

STALEY: "I think when we talked about our plan to win, I think any time you play an offense that is this historic, when you are playing against three players that are historic players in the game you have to be aggressive. Not reckless, but you have to be aggressive. I felt like all of our decisions were sound decisions. They were not over aggressive. I thought they were just aggressive. I felt like part of the plan to win today was if you look at this team historically, you have to turn them over. I think we were able to do that today."

With four takeaways, that is a perfect situation certainly to get four. They are just a really tough team to play against if you don't. They score the ball so prolifically, so to be able to take away some of their turns, create more opportunities for your offense and then change the field position, I think that was really critical in the ball game today. The fact that Justin (Herbert) stayed mistake free. When you go 4-0, that was as impactful as anything in the game with the takeaway margin."

Q: How does this experience of winning in the final moments help with the big picture?

STALEY: "You have to close out games, like last week was a tight one. Patrick Mahomes had a two minute drive today and we were able to finish it on defense. I feel like this does give you confidence. There were some end of game decisions defensively in a low two minute drill like that where you are really unpacking your last play type stuff against them. That high level execution that does not happen a lot. Are you executing? You have to have it. Are you staying penalty free? Are you making sure that you are connected and playing sound football? I feel like that was really big. I think offensively being able to unpack that last drive and being able to hang tough and with a couple critical third downs, operationally we still need to be better from our procedural stuff. We had two motion penalties again which has been a huge point of emphasis and clearly we need to have it be an even bigger emphasis because we can't play like that. We are fortunate we have a gangster quarterback. We have to coach better in that part of it. It is the situational part of it. It happens against great teams and that was a great team we just played. To finish these types of games, you got to play well at the end, and I felt like we did that today."

Q: On Mike Williams' last touchdown and running out the clock...

STALEY: "If that was going to be how it unfolded, finishing with the ball, we really wanted to put the ball in our offense's hands to finish that game out. We knew there was not going to be a lot of time for that group, and they had one timeout and that was it. They had to go score a touchdown, so we felt like time was on our side. That was a run with a tag for an advantage situation, which we have done a really good job with this year. When you have good run solutions, like that with the goal line fade, and a good matchup that you like, certainly Mike Williams is one of those guys we feel confident in."

Q: How critical was it to answer after they scored 17 points in a row?

STALEY: "I think that may be storyline of the game because that team goes on runs. That is the Golden State Warriors over there. That is Klay Thompson. That is Stephen Curry. That is Kevin Durant over there and they are going to make plays. We knew that. Hey listen, at halftime we were feeling good, but this team is not going down like that. They are going to make plays. They are going to make a run. When they make their run, we have to come together as a team and find our way. I felt like we did a good job. Defensively, we kept our composure. We were forcing them to drive the field. That was the silver lining in those three drives. They were not knock out punches. They were drives where we were executing, and they were making some plays. I think we can play a little bit better in the lower red. I was a little bummed about that, but you have to consider who you are playing against. Offensively, when we had kind of lost the momentum on defense, we were able to respond and score touchdowns today. That was the big thing down in there. We were able to score touchdowns and that was a big story in the game. You can't trade field goals with that team. It is tough to beat them that way."

Q: How impressive was Justin Herbert's throw to Mike Williams with defense rushing hard?

STALEY: "This guy's made some incredible throws with people right on him. The type of toughness this guy plays with. I thought he took some shots that were borderline. This guy delivers the football. He has real toughness. We all know how talented he is. When you talk about his intangibles and his toughness, more than his talent, that is saying a bunch. He showed all that stuff today and we needed all of it in order for us to win."

Q: The Chiefs rushed for 186 yards. What can you guys do differently to stop the run?

STALEY: "It was really 141 - the quarterback had 45 on loose plays, which does not count for me. You have to assess how you're going to play that team. I felt like it was going well early. There were a couple of four and five-yard runs. Their longest run of the day was 14 yards. We felt like that was going to be a big part of the game plan. I feel like we can certainly execute a hair better. Maybe a couple fours and fives, maybe those go for ones and twos; that's what you would hope for against a team like this. I felt like we tackled exceptionally well today. Like I said, when you take that 186, look at it a little bit closer because 45 came on loose plays from the quarterback. So it's really like 141 on 26 attempts. I can live with that versus that team. What I felt like the storyline in the game was 44 attempts for 260 yards. When you can hold that guy to 5.5 yards per attempt, that's rare. I'd love to know how many times that's been done. Putting a roof over that guy is not easy, with as good as he is and as good as they are around him. I felt like our defense really, really competed today."

Q: Talk about the impact Joey Bosa had today.

STALEY: "I'd love to bring that up. Joey Bosa exemplified the warrior spirit that you need in order to beat a team like this. When you're not feeling great, you need your premium players out there. Derwin James got nicked up, he comes back out because he has a warrior spirit. That's what you need when you play a team like this. It's all hands on deck. We won the takeaway battle four-nothing. We're there at the end because they're that good of a team. Joey came out there and competed in the game, gave us a real chance. He had the big sack, which was a huge momentum builder for us because it was (like), 'Hey, Joey Bosa is out there.' We all know that he was holding the rope out there not feeling his best. I felt like he really competed in the game and gave us a chance."

Q: What does the performance today say about the defensive backs?

STALEY: "I'd like to bring up a couple guys, too. Tevaughn Campbell started at Star for us today and was fantastic in the game. We felt like this guy (Tyreek Hill) has real speed and we needed to match the speed of that guy, him and Mecole Hardman. We felt like we needed a guy that could run a 4.3 in the slot, because Chris (Harris Jr.) is out. Tevaughn Campbell came in and had two huge forced fumbles in the game and he was connected all day in pass coverage. I don't think you can say enough about that guy. In the deep part of the field, (S) Nadir Adderley, (S) Alohi Gilman and (S) Derwin (James Jr.) are playing as well as you can play against that team. They're really well-coached. I've bragged about our secondary coaches, (Secondary Coach) Derrick Ansley, (Assistant Secondary Coach) Tommy Donatell, (Defensive Quality Control Coach) Isaac Shewmaker, those guys are unbelievable back there. And they have a lot to do with it too, because of how connected we are. (DB) Mark Webb came in the game today, a rookie, playing dime money, playing fantastic. And that's what you need, you need all hands on deck to play against a team like that, because there's danger every snap. I felt like our guys really understood our game plan and executed at a high level."

Q: It didn't hurt you this week, but what's going on with the illegal shift penalties?

STALEY: "It definitely hurt us this week. We're lucky we got bailed out. Our guys have to do a better job of understanding (that) if there's time on the clock and maybe it's not happening like we practiced it, we have to understand that when you are sped up a little bit, that's sequencing and we have to practice it more. We're a big motion team. Motion gives you a great chance to be successful - we want to be a motion team. But there are some things that are happening out there that are, quite frankly, on me. We have to do a better job practicing and we will. We can't have the procedural issues pre-snap. You can't do that if you're a clean operation and we have not been clean enough. We had eight penalties today and that's too many. We need to perform better, and I need to do a better job coaching."

Q: How do you keep it from being a nail-biter?

STALEY: "The storyline will be four takeaways. But let's say it wasn't - I still think it's going to be a close game, no matter how it unpacks against them. They're one of the premium teams. I think what you just have to get used to, if you're playing premium teams in the NFL, it comes down to the end regardless of who the team is, but particularly against them. That's where, situationally - end of game or end of half, the red area, all of those things - that's when it's so important and that's why we have to continue to practice them so much. To beat that team, you have to be at your best in those situations and we're going to continue to improve. There's a lot in the film that we're not going to like. Last week, I know it was the tough side of things, but we can't have an illusion of what happened either, just because we won. There's going to be just as many things that didn't happen right that we have to tell the truth about. That's where we can't be confused and I'm excited to get to those details tomorrow."



***Kansas City Chiefs vs. Los Angeles Chargers
Sunday, September 26, 2021
Game 3
Chargers Quarterback Justin Herbert***



Q: On that last touchdown pass, Mike (Williams) said that was supposed to be a run. Can you just take us through what you saw and that decision?

HERBERT: "Yeah, it's one of those plays where we've got a designed run, but we've got a pass tagged onto it. If we get the look, one-on-one with Mike Williams, all week we talked about taking advantage of those matchups."

Q: Brandon (Staley) said that on that fourth down play he wanted to put the ball in your hands. How much does that mean to you that he trusts you that much on a fourth down situation late in the game?

HERBERT: "It means everything to us. We've worked so hard ever since this offseason. All of the time we've spent together, to be put in this position for these exact moments, we've got the right guys out there. I know that Coach Staley believes in us, Coach Joe Lombardi believes in us and for us to go back out there on fourth and nine to win the game, is awesome for us."

Q: What is Mike Williams doing right out there?

HERBERT: "Mike Williams changes our offense. He's one of those guys that we knew going into this year, we needed to get him the ball more. When you spread the ball out between Keenan (Allen), Jared Cook and Mike Williams, it doesn't get much tougher than that."

Q: On the 20-yard touchdown to Mike Williams, he said he was supposed to run a slant route but, on the release, he ran a go route. It seemed like Chris Jones was in your face. How were you able to see Mike breaking off on that go route?

HERBERT: "That's a good question. That's something we're going to have to watch during the film. It was supposed to be a slant but Mike has such a great feel for leverage of the defender. He put his hand up, I saw it and got the ball off quick enough. I didn't actually get to see him catch the ball because I was on the ground but he makes plays out there. For him to do that, we definitely have to talk about it, but it was good to see from him."

Q: Is it easier to take a hit like that when the result is a touchdown?

HERBERT: "Much easier. It's much easier to get back up when it's a touchdown and especially when you've got Mike Williams running the route."

Q: You guys went for it on fourth and nine. How clutch was that moment for you guys to be able to go for it and coming out with a victory because of that decision?

HERBERT: "I thought it was great because we go into that huddle and everyone believed. You go out there and see all the faces of the guys, you see all of the offensive linemen, the receivers, the running back, everyone believed. Everyone knew that we went out there and had the right play, we had the right guys out there. We've been through this situation tons of times before. Just trust each other, go out there, execute and good things will happen."

Q: How big was it to not have any turnovers today?

HERBERT: "I think it was huge for our offense and especially for the defense to get four like that, you have to play smart ball against these guys. The Chiefs are about as good as it gets. You can't turn the ball over, you can't have all of these penalties against the Chiefs and expect to win. That's kind of the game plan that we had set for ourselves. Thankfully, we played it out pretty well."

Q: Derwin (James Jr.) said he "loved you", Mike (Williams) said you "balled out" and Brandon (Staley) called you a gangster. What does that mean for all three of them to be talking about you that way?

HERBERT: "Well, I appreciate the kind words. They all say it in their different ways, but it's awesome. We've got another opportunity next week. We'll watch the film and enjoy this one for a little, bit but it's time to get back to work."

Q: Did you have an edge to yourself because of what happened last week?

HERBERT: "You know, I think that's one way to look at it, but I think it's always an opportunity. The football season is so long that you have to forget about the last one. You have to move on, you have to learn from it and if you let that team beat you again, you're not doing yourself a service. I thought the guys did a great job attacking this week of practice, knowing that we were going up against an incredible team with a great offense, great defense. We gave them the right amount of respect. We watched a bunch of film, we went out there and executed and I think good things will happen when we do that."

Q: You guys went into halftime with the lead and then they come back out after and score two touchdowns. Did you say anything to the guys on your next drive? What was the approach there and what do you think allowed you guys to be so resilient?

HERBERT: "Just at halftime, I told them to finish. The defense was playing a great game, getting turnovers. It's kind of tough when they get the ball at the end of the half, go score and then they get the ball to start the second half. Those are two possessions where they're kind of able to catch up. I thought we did a great job offensively of answering that. It would've been really easy for us to go three-and-out and give the ball back. I thought the offense battled and the way the guys played up front, I thought was incredible."

Q: When you made your trip here last year, the circumstances were different, but do you think playing in this environment helped you get off to that quick start that you had today?

HERBERT: "I think it does. It was an awfully lot louder today than last year, given the circumstances. It's an incredible environment and an incredible team that we were going up against. It was a great opportunity for us to answer a loss we had a week ago. I'm so proud of the way the guys battled back, especially answering that loss last week."

Q: Before that touchdown to Keenan (Allen), you guys went no huddle in the red zone. How did that come about this week in practice and why you guys felt it worked there in the red zone?

HERBERT: "Just keeping their dime personnel off the field. When we're up on the ball and we move fast, it's tough to cover those guys. You kind of avoid some of the pressures that they bring, so if you get on the ball quickly, especially some of the plays that we called, you get your guys out in space and you're able to make reads and make plays."



***Kansas City Chiefs vs. Los Angeles Chargers
Sunday, September 26, 2021
Game 3
Chargers Players***



WR MIKE WILLIAMS

Q: On his game-winning touchdown.

WILLIAMS: "It was actually a running play with a fade tag. After the play, Coach [Staley] was like, 'We wanted to run the ball and run the time out and kick a field goal.' Obviously, that didn't happen. We left like thirty seconds on the clock for them. But we trusted our defense to get a stop. It was supposed to be a running play with a fade tag. Justin [Herbert] trusted me and I went up and made a play."

Q: What was the feeling like after the game?

WILLIAMS: "It was amazing. Obviously, last week was all self-inflicted. The penalties killed us last week, so we just wanted to limit those. We had the one on the touchdown, but other than that, we just wanted to control what we could control. We wanted to come out playing our type of ball and limit the penalties."

Q: On the 20-yard touchdown down the sideline, what did you see on that play?

WILLIAMS: "It was man-to-man. Beat the man in front of you. That was basically the type of game it was in certain situations. There was a man on top of you and me and Justin [Herbert] were on the same page. I didn't have that route to be honest. I kind of changed it up in the middle of the route, but Justin and I were on the same page and I made the play."

Q: What type of route were you supposed to run?

WILLIAMS: "A slant. I kind of beat him on the release. I put my hand up and Justin [Herbert] found me."

Q: What is it about this stadium, as you have great games here?

WILLIAMS: "I think it's the energy. The energy here is amazing. I don't know. I always feel like I have pretty good games here. Let's continue to make that happen."

Q: You've had four touchdowns in the last three games. Do you think you're ungaurable?

WILLIAMS: "I'm just out there making plays. I'm getting put into great positions to make plays. I'm just taking advantage of every opportunity I get."

S DERWIN JAMES JR.

Q: How's your shoulder?

JAMES: "I'm great. I'm good. The team made sure I was good. They took x-rays and everything came back good and was able to get back out there ... I wrapped it, it was good."

Q: What does this win mean for your team?

JAMES: "It's a big victory because I feel like we played team football today. The defense came out in the first half and got some turnovers, takeaways for our offense. And our offense, they came out in the second half, and they had our back. We gave up a few touchdowns, but the offense carried us in the second half. Special teams was great too."

Q: What happened on the play where you hurt your shoulder?

JAMES: "[Travis] Kelce kind of came at me and we kind of bumped into each other. After that, it was good."

Q: What does it mean to get four turnovers against that team (Kansas City)?

JAMES: "I feel like you have to take the ball away from them in order to beat that team. You see with four turnovers that they were still in the game. We got to keep getting turnovers against this team. We gave ourselves a chance to win today."

Q: What does it say about the young players forcing turnovers today?

JAMES: "A turnover ain't got no age on it. A turnover don't matter how old you are. Whoever makes the play, it's your time to make the play. We always say, 'Why not me?' We're always stressing that to each other, that we got to get the ball more."

Q: What did you think about your quarterback [Justin Herbert] today?

JAMES: "I love 10. I love 10 back there. I love him at all times. We're trying to get the ball to him as much as we can. We know what they're going to do with it. When our offense gets stopped, they're really stopping themselves. We want to get the ball to them as much as we can. 10's a player, man."