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## Chargers Media Availability

Monday, October 25, 2021 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

### HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

#### **On the signing of WR Andre Roberts and his ability to contribute as a kick/punt returner:**

"I think that he has a lot of experience. Andre got here last week. I feel like he's exactly what we need. We need someone with experience that has had a high level of production at the position. As recently as last year — really, the last three years — he has been extremely productive. I know that our coaching staff has a lot of respect for his game. I've been places that have faced him, being on the other side of it. I think that he is going to be a real asset, moving forward, for us. We'll see where it goes. Glad to have him. Him being an anchor, with experience and production, is going to be a real positive for both return units."

#### **On if Roberts will return both kickoffs and punts:**

"He will."

#### **On the decision to sign a returner:**

"I think that we were looking for a new direction. For someone of his caliber to come available, it was good timing for both sides. I know that he is energized by the opportunity, and so are we. Also, you can't minimize having a returner that does both phases. That's a very big asset if you can have it. I think that he can improve both phases of return, and we need it."

#### **On if S Nasir Adderley, DL Justin Jones and LB Drue Tranquill are 'trending toward' playing this week:**

"Yes. They are trending positively. They were out there [today]. We've gotten good reports from them. We're going to see how a full practice goes on Wednesday. All three were out there. Look for them to play this week, hopefully."

#### **On LB Kenneth Murray Jr.'s recovery process:**

"He's getting closer. He's a little bit further away than those three. We're going to be careful with his ankle and err on the side of time. He's progressing well. He's in a much different place than he was before the bye, for sure."

#### **On K Tristan Vizcaino:**

"We had a good chance to evaluate him and where we're at with the kicking situation, both in field goals and on kickoff. I think that we've learned a lot about his game. We're going to make sure that we keep all of our options open at that position, but we still have a lot of confidence in Tristan. That's something that I still believe in my heart, that this guy has real talent. We're just going to see where it goes. I think that we've identified some factors that can help his game. At the same time, we're going to make sure that we keep all of our options open at that position."

#### **On WR Keenan Allen:**

"He just had a dental appointment. He'll be back on Wednesday."

**On the sport of basketball:**

“It was my first love. It’s the game that I probably know the best. That’s probably why I reference it the most. I think that our guys gravitate towards the sport, too. It’s the sport that, I would say, in the locker room, that they talk about the most. I just like making those comparisons. It’s always fun to go back through different eras of basketball for player comparisons and different styles of play. It’s just an easier metaphor in an NFL locker room.”

**On the last time that he played organized basketball:**

“In high school. I had a good run with my college teammates at Dayton in intramurals. We kind of had a run of three-straight championships together. I wouldn’t consider that organized, although it was competitive. Basketball was my first love. That’s kind of where my heart always goes, from a comparison to football.”

**On last season’s loss to the Patriots:**

“I won’t address it because I wasn’t here for that. I think if our players draw on that internal motivation — guys that were at the game — then that’s their thing. For me, I’m just treating this week like it has a life of its own. This is the 2021 Chargers-Patriots game, and I feel like that’s our approach this week. You’d have to ask the guys on how they feel about it. I know that we’re just going to attack the 2021 Patriots. They are an outstanding team.”

**On Patriots Head Coach Bill Belichick:**

“From my vantage point, it’s their identity in all three phases that works through him and have stood the test of time for 20 years in the National Football League. When you’re playing their team, they are connected in all three phases. I think they’re a very complete team in that way; they know how to play to the strength of their football team. That’s something he does an excellent job of. Studying him not only as a head coach, but as a defensive coordinator, I think he’s been able to shape and fit his personnel everywhere he’s been. That’s a strength of his. I think that their team plays that well. He knows how to organize a team that’s competitive in all three phases of the game, not just one. You never see their team out of balance. They’ve been a team that can compete in all three phases and play championship-level football. I think you can see that with the way this team is built. They’re really coming in with their own. They reshaped that team the way that he wants it and they are playing at a high level.”

**On Patriots QB Mac Jones:**

“I see a guy that’s an outstanding decision-maker. I think his processor is at a premium for a young quarterback; you can really see that he can see the game. I know the way they play on offense, they ask a lot of that position. You can tell that he can process at a high level because of the type of plays they’re running. They’re running a lot of premium-type offensive plays that you would think a more experienced quarterback would have. He has that kind of command over their system, and I think he has really good anticipation as a thrower. I think that’s a big asset of him just as a pure passer — he has great anticipation and his ball placement is outstanding. He’s got real toughness for the position. You can see when he’s in tight pockets that he’s willing to hang tough and play the way you’re supposed to play. There really is a good reason that they drafted him in the first round. I think with Alabama, you saw the production and you saw the way his teammates felt about him. There were a lot of first-round players that he was playing with. You can tell a lot about a quarterback in how his teammates talk about him, how they feel about him. I think he has really great leadership qualities. He’s off to a good start as a pro player.”

**On corrections he wants to make based on watching film:**

“Our front mechanics and technique at the first level need to improve. It needs to improve is with me — I need to do a better job coaching. Our players will play better if we define things better. I think at that first level, that will help a lot. Behind it, we had some replacement issues into the boundary from a run-support standpoint that hurt us. Really, it was just uneven at times — the first six games — they were all good stretches, but we played three premium running teams that exposed some of those tough moments for us because of how prolific their runners and their running attacks are. You can look at me for why it didn’t go well enough. We have made some good corrections over the last week or so. I’m excited to get going with our guys because I know we have what it takes, and we’re excited to compete against a really good running team. New England has always been able to run the football.”

**On T Bryan Bulaga:**

“I think he will be able to return this season, that’s the feedback we’ve gotten from the doctors. How quickly that happens? I don’t know, but the feedback we’ve received is that he will be able to return at some point. I just don’t know when that’s going to be because it’s still fresh. But, that’s our anticipation.”

**On Belichick’s experience as a defensive coordinator:**

“When I’ve studied Bill, I’ve seen a complete coach. I see a guy that had a rich education, starting with his dad, who was in scouting and was kind of a coach himself. You get into that scouting background of assessing players and teams. I think he has that background, which is such a strength of his. Then, he started out as a special teams coach in the league, so he has that global perspective of special teams and how to put together the back half of a roster. He partnered up with one of the great coaches in NFL history with [Pro Football Hall of Fame Coach] Bill Parcells and was able to be a part of a lot of championship-caliber teams. The thing I don’t think is talked about enough with Bill Parcells is that all of his quarterbacks played really well — they all played really well for him. I think Bill Belichick learned a lot from that, how you need to play with different styles of quarterbacks. When he got further into his career, you can see that he’s gotten his quarterbacks to play at extremely high levels. He’s an outstanding offensive coach. I think that’s something he doesn’t get enough credit for. He’s an outstanding offensive coach, defensive coach and special teams coach. That’s why they’ve played the way they’ve played up there for so long; because he’s a complete coach. That’s something I’m trying to be. If I had to say the biggest takeaway from him, for me, is that he’s a complete coach.”

**On what he learned about the team over the bye week:**

“I think we have a team, number one. We have a team that believes in each other. I think we’ve become a team, which is really important in the NFL that you have that. Otherwise, you’re just a collection of pieces. I know that our guys really believe in what we’re doing here. I think we’re battle-tested. Looking back and watching those six games that we’ve played, those are six real NFL environments that we were playing in. I think that’s an advantage because you have a true assessment of where you’re at in all three phases. You know where you need to go — you know where you’ve been, and you know where you need to go, how we need to evolve as we go. It’s important. Our guys are really committed to how we do things on a day-to-day basis here. That’s really important because, as you saw over the weekend, it’s a week-to-week league, and you have to be up for that. Every single week is a new week. I think that our guys have really taken to how we approach things with each week having a life of its own. I’m really proud to be around those guys. It gives you a chance.”

**On player involvement with the community:**

“Part of the special platform in the NFL is for these players to express themselves and what’s important to them. These guys have certain mission statements that they’re a part of, that are important to them. They have the platform to help those initiatives in a big way. The communities they come from, their families, I think it’s really important for these players that they’re able to do that. You have such a small window of time as a player, but you can take advantage of it in a big way that can set you up for the rest of your life. That’s what we’re trying to do — give these guys every platform they have to take advantage of their time in the NFL so that they can affect the type of progress and change, and impact the initiatives and the people that are important to them. That’s one of the special things about the NFL.”

**On ‘being a team’:**

“What I mean by that is that these games have all been a little bit different in how they’ve been played. It hasn’t been one side of the ball or the other. I’ve seen a lot of football being played together. It hasn’t been one side of the ball or the other where you have a tilted team. That was a goal of mine, for us to be a complete team. We’ve won these games in a lot of different ways, and we’ve lost them in a similar fashion. It’s a good sign for your team when you have balance. That’s certainly my goal for us here with the Chargers — for us to be a complete football team, where one side or one group of players is different than the others. That’s not the formula for success in this league. The formula for success is having a complete team, and that’s what we’re going to try and stress every day here.”

## **WIDE RECEIVER MIKE WILLIAMS**

### **On how Head Coach Brandon Staley has contributed to his development:**

“When he first got here, he told me his plan for how he wanted me to be as a player; how he played me in the past when going against me, and what he thought that I would be good at based on the coverages that I see and the style of play that I was using in the past. He helped me out with that.”

### **On his knee:**

“It’s good. Everything is good.”

### **On how much his knee impacted his performance in Week 6:**

“It got tight. It got kind of sore and tight. I couldn’t really do what I wanted to do, so we shut it down.”

### **On if the bye week was beneficial for his knee recovery:**

“For sure. I don’t really feel it anymore. I’m solid.”

### **On how his knee injury occurred:**

“It wasn’t anything that happened in the game. I woke up Monday, worked out, and everything was fine. Later on in the evening, it just swelled up. I got it drained, and then the swelling kept coming back. That was it.”

### **On if it was the same knee that had been affected in 2019:**

“Yes.”

### **On if this injury is related to the knee injury he sustained in 2019:**

“Probably. I don’t know.”

### **On where the offense can improve coming out of the Week 6 loss:**

“We didn’t convert early on third downs. We got off the field pretty early in the game. We just have to convert on third down and keep the drives going. Everything else will kind of play out on its own to keep the drives going.”

### **On if not converting early on third down was due to the looks that the Ravens’ defense presented:**

“No. On our end, I dropped a shallow [pass] on third-and-two. We would’ve had a first down. Dropped it, got off the field early. A couple of missed plays on our end. Everything we can control. We’re good on our end. We just have to make those plays.”

### **On if he thought about the Ravens game early last week going into the bye:**

“Obviously, when you play a game, you think about it. But, the game was already over. We can’t really do much about that. We can just watch the film, re-group from that, learn from that and get better this week.”

### **On if the team has talked about last season’s loss to the Patriots:**

“No. That hasn’t been brought up one time. Not today. Maybe Wednesday. No, we haven’t talked about it. We know what happened last year, and we’re going to do everything possible not to let that happen again.”

### **On if the players have discussed last season’s loss to the Patriots:**

“No. We haven’t.”

### **On how last season’s loss to the Patriots impacts this season:**

“It’s a new year, a new team on both sides of the ball. I feel like it’s going to be different.”

### **On Patriots Head Coach Bill Belichick:**

“I feel like he believes in his players. They play a lot of man-to-man. There are a lot of crazy fronts that he uses to kind of confuse the offense. We just have to be on the same page, as an offense.”

### **On last season’s loss to the Patriots:**

“Everything in that game was bad. Everything was bad in that game. We don’t want to talk about it.”

**On former Chargers teammate and current Patriots TE Hunter Henry:**

“That’s going to be lit. Obviously, he was a big part of our team in the past. It’s going to be good to see him. We are going to try to make some plays against him, so we’ll see how that goes.”

**On if he has been in contact with Henry recently:**

“I haven’t, no.”

**On the coaching staff’s message to the team today:**

“From the last game, it was third down. Just being more aggressive in our play-calling on first and second down, basically. Control what we can control.”