

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 Week 11 Media Availability

Wednesday, November 16, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On if WRs Keenan Allen and Mike Williams will return to practice today:

“Yes, they will participate in individual [drills] today.”

On if he ‘has an idea’ on if Allen and Williams will be available to play on Sunday:

“I do not. It’s only Wednesday, but you will see them practice this week. I think we’re just going to build them up as we go and I think we’ll be able to tell you a lot more as the week goes on. Friday, I will probably have a lot better report, I think, for you guys.”

On the acquisition of DL Tyeler Davison:

“Tyeler Davison was with New Orleans, Atlanta and Cleveland. [Offensive Coordinator] Joe Lombardi and [Offensive Line Coach] Brendan Nugent were with him. We’re familiar with him on our staff. [Outside Linebackers Coach] Giff Smith, [Run Game Coordinator/Defensive Line Coach] Jay Rodgers, myself are kind of familiar with his game, being at other places. I have a lot of respect for his game from afar. He’s an experienced player. He played on some good teams. He was in Cleveland, and as you guys know, [Browns S] John Johnson, one of my former guys, knows him, as well. Really excited to get him into practice. He was here yesterday. He’s going to be in the mix for us, so looking forward to seeing him out there today.”

On how ‘careful’ the team will be with Allen returning to practice:

“Whatever the highest percentile of care is, that’s where it will be [*laughter*].”

On determining when Allen will be ‘ready to play’:

“We’ll trust what we see on the field and we’ll trust what we see from him on the field because the player will ultimately tell you by how he is, how he is doing. We’ll be able to see if he’s playing with that same pace that Keenan Allen is famous for. Like I said, the highest percentage of care, that’s what we’ll be taking to get him back this time and for him to stay back.”

On OLB Joey Bosa’s timeline of returning to practice:

“It’s going to be some time. I don’t know for sure. I’m not going to put a timeline on that one because I think that is more uncertain. He’s back in our building. He’s making progress. He’s feeling better, but I think we’ll be able to sort of give you the news of when he’s going to be back. I’ll try to be the first one to report that to you guys so that you guys can be ready for it, but I think he is still a couple of weeks away.”

On T Trey Pipkins III’s injury status:

“Trey [Pipkins] will be back in practice this week. I think the rest from the game helped him. As you guys know, he tried to give it a go pregame. I’m really proud of him for that, but I think that we’ll be able to get him the right amount of ramp-up this week, so hopefully, he can give it a go on Sunday.”

On if Pipkins will practice today:

“Yeah, he’ll be in individual [drills].”

On defending the Chiefs' offense with injuries to the defensive line:

"The Chiefs have one of the top offenses in the league, and have for a long time. This year is no exception. They have added some new players and really brought them into that offense beautifully. They are playing at a high level and they are very dangerous because they can beat you a lot of different ways with a lot of different people. At the center of it all is [Chiefs QB] Pat [Mahomes] running the show. They also have an outstanding offensive line. I think that is the group that doesn't get nearly as much credit as it should on their team because you are so aware of their skill players and the production, but that output is a large part because their offensive line plays at a high level together."

On integrating additions along the defensive front:

"It's just going to be a team operation, just like it was in the San Francisco game. We were playing with some new guys in that game, as well. This isn't the first time we have had to onboard new guys. I just think people take for granted a little bit [OLB] that Derrek Tuszka and [OLB] Jeremiah Attaochu, those guys are new and they played in the game, too. We're used to doing that. It's going to take all of the coaches and players in order to get these guys up to speed for Sunday. We have a lot of time between now and then. I'm excited to see our team help these guys attack the gameplan and be able to play at a high level come Sunday. That's why we brought them here is we feel like they can do that for us. It's going to be a team effort in order to get it done."

On the 'mood' of the locker room:

"I just think energizing. Energizing that you are playing another really good team at home. It's a big division game. We all know how we competed in the last game. I think our team is gaining energy from how we are playing, not losing it. We just have to take the practice field the right way this week because this team deserves our full attention. We have to prepare at a high level this week so that we can go play at a high level."

On the players 'not using injuries as an excuse for losses':

"I think that they expected to win that game on Sunday night. They fully expected to win it. They believe in how we do things here. They believe in, I think, most importantly, in one another. You have to have that going into every game; the belief that you are going to win. I hope that is not a cliché to anybody because in competition, if you don't believe you're going to win, it doesn't matter how much talent you have, how much ability you have, you are never going to go as far as you can go. So, our guys expected to go out there and play well. We have good leadership on this team, as I think you are seeing. I think you are seeing the real dogs on our team bring everybody along. That's what you need when you face a lot of stuff in the league. I think our guys are really rising to the occasion that way and I expect it to continue to get better as we go."

On the 'energy; that Allen and Williams bring to the practice field:

"I said it the other day, I'm going to let you be the judge of that [*laughter*]. I think that you guys should see it for yourself today. Them being on the field together, hopefully, you can see it for yourself. For those who know those two guys, it will be entirely different with those guys on the field. I'm hoping that will bring a nice little bounce to practice, for sure."

On 'the excitement of returning key players in the future':

"I don't take anything for granted. I think what you learn in the NFL, the longer you are in it, is that it's day-to-day, and so I think our confidence comes from what we're going to do today. You just know that there is so much that can happen. When these guys do get back — if and when they do get back — they are going to have teammates that are ready to join up with them and, hopefully, they can just come back and do what they do and give us what they always give us. That's part of the season, is being able to figure out times like this. I'm hoping that it's energizing as we, hopefully, can get some guys back. There has been a lot of subtraction, looking forward to addition. I think that, hopefully, this week that happens."

On TE Gerald Everett's injury status:

"He's going to work back into practice. We're going to make sure that we're careful with him as the week goes, but it was encouraging news from the game that he'll be able to be in practice in some capacity this week."

On if there is 'something different' about playing on *Sunday Night Football*:

"I think any time that you're the only game going, there is a lot of energy that comes with that. You know that the entire world is watching you. You know the sport of football, the attention that it gets, it's just a great opportunity to showcase who you are. I know that last week, that brought out the best in our team and I expect it to be the same going against another special opponent. I expect the challenge to bring out the best in everybody on our team."

On DL Breiden Fehoko's performance last week:

"Breiden [Fehoko] plays like he has played for us in the past. He is just playing better now because he's been with us longer. It's an outstanding team that he is going against, and Breiden was productive in the game. Those three guys holding the rope for us in that fourth quarter, that is one of those games you are not going to forget. He needs to continue to improve and make plays for us. That what we expect him to do is to make plays for us. He's doing a good job. He's a type of guy that has a lot on intangibles, so we expect him to help out Tyeler [Davison] this week and get up to speed so we can go play well."

On Fehoko's personality:

"There is just a vibe. There is a verve to him. He's a guy that really loves the game. To me, he's one of those pure examples of what the player should be, in terms of how much he loves everything about ball, not just playing, he just loves everything about ball — lifting weights, meeting room, in the locker room. He's going to have a successful career when he's done playing. He'll probably have successful off-the-field ventures because he's really smart. He loves sports. He's a guy that is a man of many talents. I'm curious if his teammates are going to give him a hard time for me saying that. I love coaching him. I love coaching him. He represents what we're about here. He's really rugged and tough. He's performed a lot of roles for us this year and excited for him to be out there playing because I know he's going to play well for us."

On S Derwin James Jr. and Chiefs TE Travis Kelce:

"Those are two of the best in the game. Those are two First-Team All-Pro players. Travis [Kelce] is one of the elite players in the history of the game. He's an historic player. We have full respect for him as a competitor. That's what makes the game what it is, is seeing the very best go head-to-head. I know the respect they have for one another. That's also something that you appreciate is that there is the real respect from two of the titans of in the league."

On if the team 'reached out' to former Chargers DL Linval Joseph before his signing with the Philadelphia Eagles:

"Number one, I wish Linval [Joseph] luck. He's going to be joining up with my guy [Eagles Defensive Coordinator Jonathan Gannon] J.G. in Philly there. We mined the entire league and felt like Tyeler [Davison] was going to be the direction that we went with. We really wanted to make sure that guys were out there ready to play. Tyeler has been in Cleveland for a while and has been practicing for two-plus months. We need someone, with where we're at, to play a nice amount of snaps. We wanted to make sure that he was ready to play, but you guys know the way I feel about Linval. I love Linval Joseph. I'm excited that he's with one of my guys there in Philly."

On James Jr.'s forced fumble last week:

"Really good awareness by him because he had coverage on the play. We had really talked about attacking the football in that game, and it was going to be a possession game. [CB] Asante [Samuel Jr.] did a good job holding [49ers WR Brandon] Aiyuk up, and then the second man came in. We preach it all the time. Derwin [James Jr.] was able to sting that ball with his hat. It was kind one of those virtuoso Derwin [James Jr.] performances. He was everywhere, doing everything, for us. He played a really high-level game. You need your guys, like similar to [OLB] Khalil [Mack] in the Atlanta game, you need your difference makers to make plays like that. That was a play that really gave us a lot of momentum in that first half."

On ‘if it is too soon to call Chiefs QB Patrick Mahomes the best quarterback ever’:

“I think you know what you see, how special he is. I think that he has earned everything that he has gotten in this league. He’s just still so new to the league. I think you’re seeing what I’m seeing from him, that he’s one of the special players to play. He’s one of the special players in the game, but he’s still at the beginning. There is still, hopefully, a lot of years of him playing this game. He’s great for the league. You have respect for competitors, and he’s certainly a guy that we have the fullest respect for.”

On his assessment of the offense:

“I think your responsibility is to assess, ‘Is your group giving you a chance in every game?’ Are they playing that game the way that you intended to play it? That’s where we’re at right now. Certainly, the output is going to be different relative to who is there and who isn’t there. It has been a tough stretch for us, five or six games, because there has just been no continuity whatsoever. What I am proud of is our coaching staff and our players hanging tough, and that’s what you have to do sometimes in the NFL. For the people that are in the NFL, sometimes you just have to hang tough, and I think our group has done a really good job of that. To answer your point about some of the metrics and some of the things that we need to improve on, there are things that we need to improve on from the last game. Like on first down in the second half, we have to get off to a better start. At the same time, we protected the football. We took the sting off some of their rushers. I think that we achieved that goal. You just take the good with the things you need to improve on and keep it moving. That’s just been the type of year it has been, but I think that our group is improving as a group because we’re figuring out more ways to play. I think that is a positive with your group because it is reality. You have to figure out ways to win a game like that. I thought we gave ourselves a chance in that San Fran game.”

On ‘why the offense wasn’t able to exploit the simplification of the 49ers’ defense in the second half’ and 49ers LB Fred Warner’s postgame comments:

“They stopped playing man-to-man because they had gotten hurt in man-to-man. When he says they simplified, they got out of stuff that was hurting them. That is accurate. Just in the second half, we weren’t able to achieve that first-down success. We knew what coverages they were playing. Obviously, it expressed itself later in the third quarter where, ‘Hey, they are not playing man-to-man anymore.’ But we just didn’t get off to a good start on first down in that game, and that’s where it really happened for us. On those runs in that second half, we weren’t able to generate anything, and then that put us behind.”

On how much he attributes James Jr.’s success against Kelce to scheme and to his abilities:

“Derwin [James Jr.] deserves the credit for playing. All credit is deserved to these players when they perform well. They both, in studying their games against one another, even long before I got there, you just know that when two great players are playing against each other, you are going to win some and you are going to lose some, and that’s how it is with both of those guys. The level of play is just so high between those two guys and what they do for their teams. That’s what you appreciate, is that both of them play at such a high level. Hopefully, it will be another show for people on Sunday.”

On James Jr.’s ‘historic statistics’ this season:

“I think that for the average NFL fan, to be able to do as much as he does on the football field, not only what he is doing, but how he is doing it — and how challenging that is physically and mentally, like the tax — it would just be hard to explain to people the tax that Derwin [James Jr.] has on him during a week. That’s what special players in the league get paid for, for that tax. But he always answers the bell and there is no role that he won’t perform for our team. I think what he does is he does all of those roles at a premium level. That is what is rare about him. You don’t have any defensive backs that can do what he can do. That is why I say you can never take what you are seeing for granted because you can name a handful of people in the last 20 years who are doing what he’s doing on a day-to-day, game-to-game basis.”