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Chargers Head Coach Brandon Staley Media Availability

Monday, November 13, 2023 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

On injury updates following yesterday's game:

"[OLB] Chris Rumph [III] has a foot fracture. It's going to require surgery. He will go to IR [Reserve/Injured]. [TE] Gerald [Everett], same as his report, he will be more day-to-day. [WR] Keenan [Allen], same comment with his shoulder, day-to-day. As you guys know, Vato [CB Michael Davis] was sick before the game and was unable to play. He is day-to-day."

On if Rumph's eventual placement on Reserve/Injured will be 'season-ending':

"We don't know that yet."

On the defense being a 'line of scrimmage team' and the correlation between that and the Lions' fourth-and-five conversion:

"We were in a six DB defense. It was kind of a bang, bang play. It was a designer run, which is not indicative of being a line of scrimmage team at all. It would be one thing if we were in an eight-man box with bigger people on the field and we weren't able to stop them for five yards, but that was a six DB defense. It's a high-leverage situation. Very rarely would you run it on a fourth-and-five, so that isn't a very accurate measurement of us being a line of scrimmage team. We stopped him short of the line-to-gain, and then they were able to push him forward for a first down. They had 29 carries for 90 yards outside of the two long runs. It's one of the top running teams in the NFL. We had two really poor plays that went for 110 yards. That had nothing to do with the line of scrimmage, it had everything to do with secondary run support and tackling. We've improved tremendously in that area, as referenced by the way we played on the goal line against a really good football team, so I think that you should look a little bit closer to the line of scrimmage before you make comments like that."

On the Lions' fourth-and-two conversion on the final possession and 'if there was any thought of brining extra pressure on the quarterback':

"Because of the nature of that play, the pressure isn't going to get there. They are a really huge jet-motion, timely team, so it was going to compromise the coverage. The pressure isn't going to get there because the ball is going to be out. Then, you're going to leave the coverage really compromised, based on how they play. We had that same exact route matched earlier in the game. We had that route matched initially, and then [Lions QB Jared Goff] was just able to progress and [Lions TE Sam LaPorta] optioned away from K9 [LB Kenneth Murray Jr.]. That wasn't a consideration at that point, in terms of how to play that down-and-distance."

On DB Deane Leonard's performance:

"I thought that he hung tough. I think he was three-for-four on targets, gave up the sideline shake pattern for like 14 yards to [Lions WR Amon-Ra] St. Brown. But, they went after him right away and I thought that he competed. He tackled OK. He gave us a chance. I was proud of the way that he came in on short notice — he wasn't planning on playing. I thought that he hung tough."

On Leonard's development in pass coverage, leading to his pass breakup yesterday:

"We've emphasized that significantly and I think that he has taken to the coaching. It was good to see him get into a live game and be able to play, really, back-to-back plays against two good receivers."

On the Lions' ability to 'attack the edges' in the run game:

"Their run game was designed to neutralize the edge players. There was going to be two guys on our edge players at all times. You saw a bunch of that, where there was motion to form two guys hitting our edge guys at one time in a variety of different ways. But, the edges in the game weren't the problem because the ball wasn't getting to the edge, per se. Most of the runs were hitting inside the 'C' area, they were kind of kicking our guys out, and then winding it back.. A couple of those short yardage plays were going to the perimeter, where they were trying to cut the edge. But, in a normal down-and-distance, it was more cutback-oriented runs. I felt like, outside of the two runs, 29-for-90, we would take that any day of the week. If those two runs were knocked down for what should have happened, 12 yards on both of those runs, then I think that we would have felt really good about the day. Certainly, that didn't happen. You can't give up two runs for 110 yards, so it wasn't good enough."

On what he 'liked the most' about QB Justin Herbert's performance yesterday:

"I thought he kept his poise. Early, I didn't think that we played very well on offense. We kind of came up empty in those first four possessions. I thought that he really kept his poise. We were able to get into rhythm, had a bunch of big third downs that I thought were really critical to get us going. I think on that first touchdown drive, we had those three third-down conversions and then he hit the big pass to Keenan [Allen], which was an incredible throw. Then, he got us going in that two-minute, end-of-half with a bunch of completions. Then, he hit the explosive to Keenan. Then, we were able to get down in there and make it on fourth-and-one. I thought, after that drive, he really got in rhythm. I thought that he used his legs a couple of times that really helped us, which is what you have to do against a good defense. But again, I thought that third down and those high-leverage situations — fourth down, red zone — I thought that he was really, really good. We finished the game playing at a high level, so I think that there's a lot to build on that way."

On Lions WR Kalif Raymond's 41-yard catch-and-run on the first play of the Lions' final offensive possession:

"It's a tough play against that coverage system. It's hard run-action, and then a shallow crosser that gets on you fast. It's a good design, gets on the hook defender fast. We were drained out to the front side with the corner and the safety on the two receivers. Good play design and good execution by them."

On if S Derwin James Jr. 'could have done anything different' on the play that led to an unnecessary roughness penalty:

"I think you know the answer to that. The guy struck his target late in the down, he led with the shoulder and we hit him in the helmet. One of those tough plays on defensive players nowadays."

On the 'theme' of areas in which the defense can improve:

"The theme is explosive plays, mainly in the pass game this year. In terms of 2023, it's just been the passing game. Just haven't done a good enough job of sustaining high-level play. I think that there's a lot of good film, and then there are a couple of plays that just really hijack your game, and they can't happen. Whether it's a communication or a technique being played, we haven't been consistent enough. Again, it starts with me."

On 'what specifically can be improved':

"It's the execution of the technique and the fundamentals. Those are within our control. We just need to do a better job of executing our assignment and our technique. If it was a scheme-related error, you would see us make adjustments that way. As I said after the game, there are a lot of things that we've improved going into this season, but that isn't one of them, the way we've played in the passing game."

On the differences in the defense's performance over each of the last three seasons:

"We've had completely different personnel for three years, completely different. Where we were at our first year, you can talk to your colleagues, to now has been different. Every season has been different, there isn't a common theme. As I said, I think that we've improved in a lot of ways. That area is not one of them, the way we've played in the passing game, just from an explosive play standpoint. We had good pass defense numbers our first two years, but just the consistency of keeping the ball where it needs to be has not happened on a consistent basis. We've done it in stretches, but we have yet to put together that stretch of consistency."

On if the 'turnover at cornerback has any relation to the explosive plays':

"Of course. Who you're playing with in the secondary, your combinations, that's always going to factor in. That's what needs to happen moving forward, we just need to continue to coach the guys that we have and that will help us develop more consistency of both assignment and technique. We just have to continue to stay with it. It's a really good group of guys. We have to continue to do better as coaches."

On 'close games' over the last few years:

"Well, we've had a lot of close since I've been here, more wins than losses. We've played in a lot of tight games because the NFL is competitive. I think that's really the nature of the league. I think for us to finish more of the close games, you have to have a team that's really operating in all three phases. I think that we've been inconsistent in that way, where sometimes the defense is playing well, and the offense, maybe not quite as such a high level, vice versa, kicking game. Then, all of a sudden, you have a tight game. Obviously, before yesterday, you had two games that weren't anything like that, where you had to three-score leads, and that's indicative of you playing at a higher level in all three phases of your team. That's really where we want to be, in those types of situations, but when it gets tight, you just need to be able to execute down the stretch and everyone just doing their job, making sure that you're playing within the scheme and people making the plays that they're designed to make. We're going to continue to trust this group of guys. We've been in a bunch of tight games this year, and have won a bunch of them, too. We just need to stay at it."

On the defense's performance yesterday:

"Obviously, we didn't get off to a good start on that first drive. We gave up an explosive pass play. That can really take something out of you, where you feel like you're off to a good start and then a play kind of gets you off-balance. I think that that had a big factor in it. I think that our tackling early in there — you miss a tackle, you give a 35-yard run — that can take some energy out of you. Then, we had to defend a bunch of plays. That's a good team. As a team, we just didn't get off to a good start yesterday. I really liked the way that we fought back in the game and really gave ourselves a chance. Midway through that second quarter on, it was tight the whole way against a good football team. We just didn't make enough plays in our fourth quarter, on defense, to finish the job."

On DL Otito Ogbornia:

"He's improving. Size, length, power at the point of attack. He's a guy that can provide a lot of middle push in pass rush. A good young guy to be developing."