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## **QB JUSTIN HERBERT DRAFT AVAILABILITY** **Thursday, April 23, 2020 | Hoag Performance Center | Costa Mesa, Calif.**

### **Opening statement:**

"This is just such an incredible opportunity. Words can't describe how excited and thrilled, and fired up I am for this opportunity. To be able to spend it in Eugene with my family — it's years of hard work. I'm going to do everything I can to be the best quarterback I can be, and do everything I can for the city of Los Angeles."

### **On his decision to return to Oregon for his senior season:**

"There was never any question about my decision. I knew that I had made the right one. To be able to finish this past year off with our group of seniors to win the Rose Bowl and to be where we are today — it's validation. Injuries and the money were never the issue. I'm so fired up and so excited for this opportunity."

### **On his journey climbing the chart while playing for Oregon:**

"It's adversity. When I first showed up we went 4-8 my freshman year, and got booed by our fans at home. It wasn't the Oregon football I was used to. Going through these past few years, [we] went through three head coaches, three different offenses, a bunch of different strength coaches. We fought through and dealt with adversity. We ended up going 12-2 and winning the Rose Bowl. I was really pleased with the way we turned things around at Oregon."

### **On his connection with Chargers Hall of Fame QB Dan Fouts:**

"Mr. Fouts is an incredible person. I'm thankful that he has reached out to me. Just to be able to follow in his foot steps, and know that he was such a great man and such a great football player — it's really cool. It's a really special opportunity."

### **On what he knows about the Chargers roster already:**

"They're very skilled. They're very athletic and they have some of the best players in the country. It's an incredible opportunity and they have a great coaching staff. They've got a lot of pieces to the puzzle. I'm just excited that they took a chance on me. I'm going to do everything I can to be the best pick I can be."

### **On his contact with the Chargers prior to the draft:**

"It was more so prior to the closing of a lot of these facilities and stuff. At the Senior Bowl and at the combine, I spent a lot of time with them. Then I had a couple Zoom meetings with them and I actually was sent a package of formations and plays from the Chargers. I was told, 'Learn these,' and 'We're going to talk about them during one of our meetings.' I missed a formation. I kinda talked to my agents after that I told them, 'I might not be a Charger. This didn't go the way that I thought.' I'm just glad it worked out. It's been really cool to get to know them."

### **On if he knew the Chargers would pick him:**

"I didn't know anything until I got the call."

### **On how he felt being part of the virtual draft:**

"It would have been great to be in [Las] Vegas. That's an experience that not a whole lot of people get to go through. But to be able to be in Eugene with my family and friends and brothers — it doesn't take away from the excitement. It's years of hard work. I'm just happy to get an opportunity and I couldn't be more thrilled for it."

**On what he was told on the phone:**

“I got a couple calls and they told me that I was their guy and that they were happy with me. They can’t wait to get to work and I felt the same way. I told them the same thing.”

**On what he expects his role to be in 2020:**

“That was never really brought up. They asked me how I felt about it and I said that I’m going to do everything I can to be the best quarterback I can be. If I’m the guy, that’s great. I love playing football and I want to be the guy, but if I have to sit back and learn, I’m going to do everything I can to become the quarterback I need to be. I’m so excited to go down there and do everything I can. To continue to work hard and just be myself.”

**On his running ability being discussed with the Chargers:**

“Not a whole lot. We brought it up a little bit. We just talked about the last two games [against] Utah and Wisconsin. They kinda asked me why I started to run more. I said that it gave us an advantage and the coaches thought it would be advantageous for us to do that. They know that I like to think of myself as pretty athletic. It’s been fortunate enough to kind of work out that way. I’m sure that they have plans, and I’m really excited to be a part of it.”

**If play concepts from the Chargers seemed catered to his running ability:**

“Not that I saw. A lot of those draw back, play-action, stuff like that. I didn’t get to see any read-zones or concepts like that.”

**On his leadership:**

“A lot of questions have come up, and I think this is a great opportunity to answer those. I think if you ask anyone at our facility at Oregon, they’d tell you differently. I know what type of leader I am. I’m genuine, I’m real, I’m myself. When something needs to be said, I don’t have a problem saying it. I feel so comfortable with the way that I’ve grown as a leader these past two years. I know that my guys and my team would tell you the same thing. It hasn’t been an issue for me at all.”

**On the Chargers:**

“Being on the west coast, I was always a big Chargers fan — especially of [current Colts QB] Philip [Rivers]. Being able to watch him was great. He’s an incredible quarterback who will go down arguably as one of the greats. Just being able to watch him has been so much fun. It’d be a disservice to compare myself to him. I have to be myself. I have to do things that I do well and I have to get better in the way I have to get better. I’m just excited for the opportunity and can’t wait to get down there.”

**On his strengths and weaknesses:**

“Some of the things I’ve been working on, especially coming from a shotgun, no-huddle team, now I have to get under center. That’s what I’ve done these past three months. A lot of the footwork stuff that comes with it. [I’ve worked on] mechanics a lot. My front shoulder comes loose at times, and that’s something I’ve been fixing up. Things like that, that I’ve got a good feeling. The people that I’m working with are helping me out.”

**On the play he missed when talking to the Chargers:**

“So it was an example — they had it off to the side as an example. They kind of described how they’d plan their formations, and this is how they do it. I didn’t think that was what I was going to be tested on. I had all the plays down, and had everything nailed down, but I missed this. I told them after, ‘I’m sorry I missed it, I didn’t know.’ That was on me.”

**On the next step he’ll take to get better for the Chargers:**

“Hopefully I get on a call with them here soon and they let me know. I haven’t gotten any information yet so I’m going to continue to do the things I’ve been doing until I’m told otherwise. I’m sure they’ll let me know here soon.”

**On his journey from high school to the NFL:**

“I’ve thought about that these past couple of months. Just to go from Sheldon High School in Eugene, Oregon with about 1,200 students. I got the call from Oregon late my senior year and I told them I was on board immediately. We went 4-8 our freshman year and really struggled. I had to fight through that. All throughout those years of football, I’ve learned a lot about myself, about the team, and about the game. I think every decision I’ve made has brought me to this point. I’m just thrilled and excited to get down there and get to work.”

**On how he has worked on his accuracy:**

“No, that was never something that was brought up. I just talked about what I’ve been working on and what I need to work on. I think, like I mentioned before, my front shoulder and arm, sometimes when it takes away, it leads first. I rely on my arm to make up for it. A lot of the times that my shoulder goes, my hips go to. So when that happens you don’t get as much on the ball. I’ve been working on this wiggle — you have to create an ‘X’ when you throw your hips first, then your arms. It’s just little things like that, mechanics wise, that I can fix.”

**On if play-action is an area he can excel in at a professional level:**

“I think that’d be great. I think that’s something we tried to do a lot at Oregon. I think, especially in the last couple of games — the last two games in particular — we did a good job with that. We definitely didn’t win that game the way we wanted to, but we won that game the Rose Bowl is tough, and 28-27 is a close game. I think play action is a huge part of any offense. I’m going to do my best to continue on footwork and getting the ball out quickly.”

**On General Manager Tom Telesco being in attendance for a game this past season:**

“I did not. I wasn’t aware of anyone that was there. I didn’t want to let that distract or take away my focus from the game. I went into each game just knowing that I was going to go play my game, relax, and then let things take care of themselves.”

**On his family’s reaction to him being selected by the Chargers:**

“They’re excited for me to be a Charger. I think they’re even more excited that I’m going to be on the West Coast. It’s been great growing up in Eugene. I can’t wait to get down to LA and go out and be on my own. This is an opportunity and an experience that I’ve been waiting for my entire life.”

**On preparing for the draft at a training facility close to Hoag Performance Center:**

“It’s great. I kind of joked about it that if I can’t get on a flight, I’ll drive down. I can’t wait to get back to work with 3DQB and John Beck — the guy that I’ve been training with. We’ve done some great work. That area is really special. To be able to go back there, it’s going to be great.”

**On the benefits of participating in the Reese’s Senior Bowl:**

“Huge. That taught me so much about the process. Especially leading up to the Combine, I had a feel of what was going on and how this works. Going through that week of training, meetings, and, ultimately, the game, it was a great experience.”

**On SoFi Stadium:**

“I haven’t seen too much yet, but it’s something that I’ll check-up on real soon and get a much better feel within the coming days.”

**On being drafted by the Chargers:**

“It’s an incredible, incredible opportunity. It’s something that I’ve waited for for so long. To be able to join such an incredible franchise, words can’t describe it enough. I want to get down there as quickly as I can and I want to get back to throwing, running, lifting and doing all of these things — and playing football. That’s what I miss most. To be able to go down there, it’s awesome.”

**On if he feels any pressure entering the NFL:**

"I wouldn't say it's pressure; I would say it's an incredible opportunity. It's a chance to do something special. To be given this opportunity, I'm going to do everything I can to make the most of it. I want to be the guy that they want me to be and I want to be the guy that I want to be. I want to be the quarterback, friend and teammate that I need to be. There's so much that I can improve upon and I'm going to get better. I'm going to do everything I can to be the best quarterback that I can be."

**On the Los Angeles media market:**

"It's a wonderful opportunity. It's a chance to go play football and that's what I love the most. You get to go play football and you get to go be paid for playing football. An incredible city on the West Coast with an incredible team. They've got the players. They've got the skill. They've got the coaches. I just can't wait to join the team and be a part of it."

**On his emotions:**

"I'm fired up. It's an incredible opportunity. This is something that I've waited for my entire life. Really, I'm just so happy and so glad that I'm able to go down there."

**On the thought of playing in Los Angeles:**

"I think it's a great city with a great franchise. I was kind of hoping that this was going to be the place and I'm really happy with how it turned out."

**On the possibility that his first NFL game could be played in an empty stadium:**

"That doesn't take away from the excitement at all. Like I said before, I've been booed at home and that didn't take away from our experience at Oregon. It's stuff that you have to fight through. At the end of the day, what matters most is playing football. As long as there are two teams out there and a ball, we're good to go. I'm just looking forward to that opportunity."

**On how he is going to celebrate being selected by the Chargers:**

"Probably get back to work. I'm going to go run, lift and throw — and I'm going to take my brothers out and make sure that they're catching passes for me. That's exactly what I'm going to do."

**On his Rose Bowl experience:**

"It's such an iconic venue and it's a game that I grew up watching. Growing up on the West Coast, I was a big Pac-12 and Pac-10 fan. To be able to go there and play in the warm weather in January, it was pretty neat. I did a good job of kind of staying away from the mock drafts and all of the projections. I couldn't get too involved because I don't have any control over what happens. While all of this was going on, I had my favorites. I'm really glad that this worked out."