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Chargers Week 3 Media Availability

Wednesday, September 21, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On QB Justin Herbert's injury status:

"Justin is day-to-day. He's had a lot of rest since the last game, but I think the nature of the week is truly going to be a case-by-case, day-by-day basis. I know that he is feeling more comfortable. I know that he was able to do some light throwing yesterday, some rotational work, but we're just going to take it day-by-day and see where his comfort level is, and truly trust him and let him be the guide of where we're at, and make sure that we are prepared either way."

On if Herbert will practice today:

"He'll be out at practice for individual [period] today. Again, we're going to try to take it day-by-day, period-by-period, to see where we're at."

On 'the history of rib injuries here and how they were treated' and 'any trepidation' involving Herbert's treatment:

"This is, obviously, of the utmost importance. Any player that goes through something like this, that is your biggest responsibility, as a coach, to take care of your players. I think that we have full alignment with Justin [Herbert], his family, his agents and the medical professionals. That's what we're going to try and do, have alignment that way and just trust the process, and, hopefully, get him well soon."

On 'further precautions and treatments' pertaining to Herbert's injury:

"Definitely, from a protection standpoint out on the field, the rib protector, he'll definitely have that, for sure. Then, the nature of the treatment plan, I think that is day-to-day. As those specifics become available, as things like that happen or are planning to happen, we'll make sure that we communicate that."

On his 'process of making the determination' of whether or not Herbert will play on Sunday:

"We're going to listen to Justin [Herbert], number one. The player is at the front of all of the decisions that we make here, since I've become the head coach, to make sure that the players are at the front of all of the decision-making — their families, their agents, their team. Then, making sure that we have alignment with the medical team. That's been my position since I've become the head coach. I think that that is where the modern NFL is, in making sure that they are at the front of every decision that we make and that they have long careers ahead of them. We have to make sure that they are as safe and sound as possible. We know that it is a tough game, and we want to make sure that they are able to play it. Just try to have full communication amongst all of those parties, and then come to a good decision there each and every time that we go out there."

On if the decision to play on Sunday will be Herbert's alone:

"It'll start with him, and then, obviously, him feeling good about what the medical team feels like is best. Him weighing the options, and then us making a good decision. Again, it's day-to-day with him, but we'll keep communicating as the week goes on."

On Herbert's workout yesterday:

"In terms of being able to go through an individual [period] today, yes."

On what he has to 'see from' Herbert in practice 'to be convinced' that Herbert can play on Sunday:

"Just making sure that Justin [Herbert] feels like he can go do the job the way that he can do it. That's the big thing, him having confidence to be able to go play the game the way that it needs to be played. I don't think that that is going to be determined today, it's going to be determined as the week goes, up until the game. When I say it's day-to-day, it's how he is feeling. That can go all of the way up until Sunday."

On if the run game will be an 'increased area of focus this week' due to Herbert's injury status:

"You start with preparing for Jacksonville and what they do, how they do it. Then, featuring who we're going to have available in the game. Then, certainly, if [QB] Chase [Daniel] is our quarterback, that factors in to a different equation, which we'll be ready for. Then, if Justin [Herbert] plays, we'll be ready for that, too. That's part of our job. The plan would be different if we had a different quarterback, but that's part of the job."

On Daniel's normal rep distribution compared to the amount he will participate today:

"Chase [Daniel] has done this his whole career. We've had to do this before. Chase is going to be ready to play. During the week, if Justin [Herbert] is full-go for the week, then he doesn't get any of the team reps in walk-through and stuff like that, but he'll take the work team [reps]. But if he's the guy that is practicing out there, then he will take the lion's share of the reps and we'll be ready to go."

On WR Keenan Allen's injury status:

"Keenan [Allen] and [TE] Donald Parham [Jr.] are day-to-day. They'll be in individual [period], trending positive. [T] Trey Pipkins [III] is day-to-day, as well, with the lateral foot. Then, [C] Corey Linsley is day-to-day with his knee."

On Linsley's injury:

"A little bit before the game, then, at the beginning of the game, just kind of felt it a little bit. He tried to play through it, but just couldn't go in the second half. It's a day-to-day thing with his knee. Hopefully, with the rest and the week here, we can get him feeling good by gameday. It wasn't a specific play, no."

On if Linsley's injury 'is related to the two practices that he missed in Week 0':

"Not related to that, no."

On the Jaguars:

"They have a nice team. They have a very improved football team. Starting with the additions they made on defense, they spent a lot of money on defense and spent a lot of high draft capital on defense. Their front is a front that I'm very familiar with, the rushers — [OLB] Travon Walker, [OLB] Josh Allen, [OLB] K'Lavon Chaisson — those guys are excellent, [DL] Dawuane Smoot. [DL] Roy Robertson-Harris, I was with him in Chicago, he's an outstanding player. [DL] Folorunso [Fatukasi] was one of the top free agents last year. You really start with that group. Then, the two linebackers. They have a first-rounder, [LB] Devin Lloyd. The other linebacker, [LB] Foyesade Oluokun, they got from Atlanta, who is an outstanding player. Then, in the secondary, they have [CB] Shaq Griffin, who was one of the high free agents a couple of years ago. [CB] Tyson Campbell, high draft pick. [CB] Darious Williams, who I was with him at the Rams, who is an outstanding player. Then, [S] Rayshawn [Jenkins], who I have a lot of respect for, and [S] Andre Cisco. They have a really good group on defense. Then, on offense, you start with [QB] Trevor [Lawrence]. Trevor, I think, has a chance to be a really good player in this league. I think you've seen him make the progress through two games where you can say, 'Hey, man, this guy is an improved NFL football player.' They've really improved the supporting cast at receiver, getting [WR] Christian Kirk, [WR] Marvin Jones — who I have a lot of respect for, I was in the division with him in Chicago when he was in Detroit, he's been a receiver in this league for a long time, very productive. [WR] Zay Jones, who we played against last year, as a receiver is very quality. Then, the backs, I think, are good, [RB James] Robinson and [RB Travis] Etienne [Jr.]. They brought [OL Brandon] Scherff in on the O-line to make sure that this guy is protected. They have high draft picks at tackle. It's a very complete group. They brought in [TE] Evan Engram. The way that they have gotten off to a good start, they could very easily be 2-0, but the way that they won last week, it certainly grabs your attention. They're a very quality football team and [Jaguars Head Coach] Doug [Pederson] is an outstanding coach."

On CB J.C. Jackson's performance last week:

"He's good, just sore. His first action in a while, just that getting that game wind and the residual soreness afterward. We were glad to get him out there and see him compete. I like the way that he played for his first game. A lot of improvement to make, but it's good to have him out there."

On the Jaguars' defensive performance last week:

"They just played team defense. They did a really good job against the back. Everyone knows what a good back [Colts RB Jonathan] Taylor is. They did a really good job against the back. Then, they really rushed the passer, created three takeaways. Really controlled the game from the beginning to the end. You don't shut a team out in this league without playing a complete game, all three levels of your defense — run game, pass game, rushing the passer, and then getting the takeaways. They were able to do that from the first snap to the last one. It was a very impressive performance."

On the details of the offense's operation in a 'tempo' scenario:

"Operationally, when you have an explosive [play] like that, clicking into a one-word cadence to let everyone know that we're going. It's a tactic that we try to use, especially after an explosion, especially down in there, force communication, simplify the defense and really dictate the terms. Obviously, it didn't go well down there, but, operationally, very simple and something that we've used very successfully in the past. That was just the tough one."

On if he 'can determine if a player wants to come out of the game while in tempo' and if the staff 'has a spotter that identifies that':

"For sure. His position coach. Myself, I say it. I take full responsibility for that play. I saw [TE] Gerald [Everett]. We felt like we could keep him in and dictate the pace of that. It was kind of a simple play, a simple job responsibility. In retrospect, certainly, it's one, as a coach, that I'll learn from. Operationally, we take full ownership. I think that all of us can learn from that, but me, most of all. I'm responsible for what happened on that play."

On 'how much' of the Jaguars' offense is a 'carryover from the Eagles' with Pederson:

"I think that he is trying to feature the quarterback, number one. I think that he has always done a good job of that, no matter what stop it's been. He has good coaches on that staff; [Jaguars Offensive Coordinator] Press Taylor, who has really good experience, [Jaguars Quarterbacks Coach] Mike McCoy. They have a very good offensive staff. I think that what you're seeing is that they are featuring the offense that Trevor [Lawrence] is comfortable with, not somebody else, but Trevor is comfortable with. I think you can see that in how he's played in the first two games, because he's an outstanding player. This guy was as good as it gets in college football. There's a reason why he was the number one overall pick, a highly regarded player. I've known about Trevor [Lawrence] ever since he was in high school at Cartersville in Georgia. I think that they have done a nice job of building the offense around him."

On the 'matchup problem' present when facing three wide receiver sets and motion:

"Any time that you force the defense to adjust, you increase your chances of being successful. Motion is a big predictor of offensive success, the play action game, early down, passing, all that type of stuff, creating completions for the guy, making sure that he's well protected, having balance, run and pass, but in terms of the types of plays that you're featuring, but being able to get your quarterback completions. I think that's what you saw last week is that there was just a lot of completions for him. He was able to really operate and spread the ball around, keep the chains moving. [Christian] Kirk has given them a big-play element to their offense. They're off to a good start."

On LB Kenneth Murray Jr.'s performance through the first two games:

"We're really pleased with his progress. I think not having a spring, not having most of training camp, for him to perform like he has the first two games, we're optimistic about his progress. He just needs to stay at it. He's seeing the game. I think he's playing physical at the point of attack. I think he's finishing plays. I think that his communication has really improved. That's what he has to do, he just has to stay after it, stay on that practice field, stay in that meeting room, and you'll continue to see the improvement because it means a lot to him. I think you'll continue to see even more as we go."

On how a team ‘experiences success after a coaching change’:

“I think that you go in and you just be yourself. You know that you have to affect every part of the organization to make change happen. You’re not just affecting the players and the coaches, you have to be around everybody in the building, you have to be around your fan base and you have to have the energy and the stamina for that, and understand that you have a real impact every day of setting the table for your organization. I think that Doug [Pederson] has done that before. He’s played quarterback in this league, at the highest level, played for a lot of different franchises around a lot of special players. He was a great player himself. As a coach, obviously, he’s worked for a lot of quality franchises. He’s a Super Bowl champion. I think that he has all the confidence in the world, from a resumé standpoint. Then, from a personality standpoint, knowing what needs to be done when he gets there and surrounding yourself with good people and good players. Normally, that’s a good formula.”

On CB Asante Samuel Jr.’s performance through the first two games:

“I’m really excited about Asante Samuel Jr. I feel like he’s playing at a high level, very much improved as a player. He’s playing with a lot of confidence. To earn confidence, he has been around the ball. He’s had to cover a lot of good players, a lot of tough downs the first two weeks, but he’s impacted the game and that’s the best thing you can say about a corner is that he’s making a lot of plays and he’s not giving very many up. I think he has improved in all ways. Like I mentioned with Kenneth [Murray Jr.], he’s just at the beginning. He has to make sure that he continues to work. That’s part of why we love him. He’s a gym rat. He’ll continue to improve because he puts a lot into it.”

On similarities between Herbert and Lawrence:

“All of these quarterbacks are so different, but I think where the comparison is, Trevor [Lawrence], when I look at him from a far, what I know of him from afar, he has poise. He has composure. You need that, as a young player. When there’s that type of pressure on you, those types of expectations, which are not new to him because he was one of the highest recruits in the country, played at Clemson, you know that he’s used to it. I think that just that poise and that composure, that takes you a long way. It earns the respect of your teammates and coaches. It earns the respect of your fans. You have to be a resilient player when you’re young, especially a quarterback with those types of expectations. Like I said, I think he has a chance to be a good player in the league.”

On Jackson’s ‘usage on the back end’ impacting rep distribution with CB Michael Davis:

“We’re really pleased with Mike, his progress. He played really well the other night in the kicking game. I think it gives you another option as a cover player to cover a bunch of different types of guys. We’re going to need him. We consider him a starting player for us. In that first game, he gave us a real chance to win that game. I thought that he played a quality game in the first game. He’s a very improved Player and we’re going to need him moving forward.”

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN SEBASTIAN JOSEPH-DAY

On Jaguars RB James Robinson:

"I would say a downhill, powerful He breaks tackles. He's an aggressive runner. They also have another good running back, number one, [Travis] Etienne [Jr.]. He's pretty good, as well. I watched a lot of him. He makes people miss in the open field. He's pretty good. They have some good backs."

On Jaguars QB Trevor Lawrence's improvement from last year:

"Not just Trevor, but the whole team, you see a lot of improvements. They have one of my old teammates over there, [CB] Darius [Williams]. They have [DL Folorunso] Fatukasi. They do a good job at D-line. They do a good job with the O-line. I don't even consider them the same team as last year."

On the challenge Lawrence presents:

"He is a big, mobile quarterback. He gets the ball out fast. He doesn't make mistakes. He also could become a runner. That's always a challenge, especially now in today's NFL. Today's NFL quarterback is able to just do it all, multi-faceted, multi-talented, being able to throw up a ball or run it. It makes it a challenge, for sure."

On the run defense's improvement:

"The first game was solid. The second game, it was solid up until the fourth quarter with that big run. I guess not doing too well right now. We have to get better."

On S Derwin James Jr.'s 'power bomb tackle' last week:

"Unreal [*laughter*]. WWE style right there. Derwin is a stud. You don't see many DBs making tackles like that."

On James Jr.'s athleticism:

"I think it just shows you the type of player Derwin is. Just tough, rugged, physical, smart, dependable, and he's not afraid to get his nose bloody. That's probably the biggest thing, especially with the backfield and the secondary guys. Guys that are able to get their nose bloody and be able to help in making tackles or help making plays in the box. That's what makes defenses elite. Derwin is obviously an elite player and we all got a glimpse of that last Thursday."

On James Jr.'s tackle and how that impacts the defense:

"It gets them amped. Everyone thought it was a fumble, so everyone was going for the ball. Of course, it gets everyone amped up and stuff. Like I said, Derwin is an amazing player and made an amazing play. That's what amazing players do."

On the 'extra days off' following the last game:

"Get our bodies right. Get our bodies right, get healthy and just reset and refocus and see what we did well, what we didn't do well, stuff like that. Just better ourselves as a team."

On DL Otito Ogbornia:

"I've seen a lot of positives out of Tito. Big guy. I mean really big, like bigger than me big [*laughter*]. Big guy, strong, smart kid. Tito has done a good job. He's growing into his own and is improving each week and I'm excited for Tito, for sure. Really good player."

On the defense's performance in the first half last week, compared to the second half:

"First half, I think we stopped the run pretty well. I think we limited a couple of explosives. I think that's when the big pass happened, in the second half, two big passes happened in the second half. Then, the big run at the end. Those are probably the things that we probably didn't do well in the second half. We just let up a little more explosives, especially the explosive run hit us. That was probably huge because if we would have probably stopped them and give our offense a chance to get the ball back, because if you think about it, that run caused them to kick another field goal, so then they were up by 10 points. Then, we scored and were down by three. Every drive, every inch counts."

On him dropping into coverage with LB Drue Tranquill and OLB Khalil Mack rushing:

“All I’m saying is that I was right in that window. I was ready, but I don’t know. I’m not really going to talk about scheme. I don’t think that’s smart for us to talk about that here [*laughter*]. What you saw is what you saw. We’ll see. Hopefully, it works more in my favor next time.”

On the last time he saw a defensive back make a tackle like James Jr. did last week:

“[Rams CB] Jalen Ramsey, last year.”

On the similarities between James Jr. and Ramsey:

“Big, tall, fast, strong, smart, cover well. Just cut from the same cloth.”