

Josh.Rupprecht@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Jennifer.Rojas@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Jamaal.LaFrance@chargers.nfl.com
Brock.Anderson@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Lauren.Meyer@chargers.nfl.com ⚡ Danny.Markino@chargers.nfl.com

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS vs. LAS VEGAS RAIDERS POSTGAME TRANSCRIPTS

Monday, October 4, 2021 ⚡ SoFi Stadium ⚡ Inglewood, Calif.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On the significance of the win:

“It was a team win. What we got to do tonight as a team is show our response to winning a big game. I think that was our first time being able to respond to a big win like that. To be able to come back home, in front of the world, I felt like we played a complete game in all three phases. We prepared extremely well. That’s a really good team that we just beat, I have a lot of respect for them. They were 3-0 for a reason.”

On the last drive:

“Patient was something we knew we had to be tonight. That defense is playing really well. My hat’s off to that defense. They lost a bunch of corners, and they were still playing competitively. [Raiders Defensive Coordinator] Gus [Bradley] is doing a heck of a job coaching that group, he’s really maximizing that group. We knew that we were going to have to be patient tonight. I felt like [QB] Justin [Herbert], in particular, was extremely patient tonight. Three touchdowns, no interceptions; he took some hits out there. They’ve got a really good pass rush, [Raiders DE] Maxx [Crosby] and [Raiders DE] Yannick [Ngakoue], those guys are really, really good rushers. They have a nice pressure package with Gus [Bradley]. On that drive, we stayed patient. I thought we had a really good mix of the run and the pass tonight. [RB] Austin [Ekeler] really came alive tonight, and then we had the really big fourth down conversion to [TE] Jared [Cook]. We knew the coverage they were going to be playing and we were able to hit him. It just felt like scoring the ball there on that drive was a big, big win for us in that game.”

On the fourth-and-two call:

“I felt like in that game, that fourth-and-two was an advantage situation for us. I felt like we knew the coverage systems that would be played in that particular down and distance. We felt good about the play call. You can’t minimize the way that [Offensive Coordinator] Joe [Lombardi] called this game tonight. He had a couple really critical fourth down calls, really good third down plan, against a really good pass rush. I liked our gameplan, we played really physically up front.”

On the TE Jared Cook and Raiders LB Denzel Perryman matchup:

“I thought it could be that. They like to disguise that, they play zone-alignment man. We felt like in that down, they were going to try and deny the ball. It felt like on that motion in, when [WR] Keenan [Allen] came in, it undressed the coverage a little bit. [QB] Justin [Herbert] knew he was going to have to matchup Jared on Denzel. I felt like 6-foot 5 versus 5-foot 11 would be a good one. It was indicated with the motion. And then we had an answer on the backside with the shallow cross if they’d done a nice job negotiating it. We had another good answer on the shallow cross. I just felt like that was an excellent play call. We got it in with plenty of time, it was loud out there tonight. Operationally, we were pretty clean; it was fourth down and it was loud, I felt like our guys really handled it well.”

On the faith he has in QB Justin Herbert:

“Full trust — that’s what he earns on a day-to-day basis. With how hard he works, how he prepares and how he performs in those got-to-have-it situations. He’s got that cool, calm, composure that affects everyone in a positive way. Including me. He executed very well tonight.”

On the defense:

“We played team defense tonight. It started in the run game; we didn’t get off to a good start with our run-front tonight. We were committed to that part of the game, and I felt like our first level was outstanding tonight. Our second level was outstanding tonight. We tackled extremely well against a really good back. I have a lot of respect for all three of their backs, but [Raiders RB] Josh [Jacobs] coming back tonight — he’s a really good runner. Outside of the Riders [WR Henry] Ruggs [III] pass, we did a nice job in the passing game. Even both drives where they scored were two tough third down losses. Our coverage systems were well played, our rush wasn’t quite good enough. Unfortunately, he was able to step up and find the guy late. But other than that, we executed our plan on a high level. I felt like our guys had command over the plan. We had four sacks tonight, we were really able to affect him early. We had four three and outs in the first half. We didn’t let them get in rhythm and so much about this season for them has been in rhythm. By getting off to the start we did tonight, we were able to play the type of defense we wanted to play. In the second half, they show you why they’re the number one offense in the NFL. They have weapons and they have a premium quarterback. I feel like it was a really good performance by our guys, one that we expect to play.”

On S Derwin James Jr.:

“Derwin made up for one of the few errors in the game earlier. It was an incredible play, him on [Raiders TE Darren] Waller. We were in good coverage for what they were doing on that particular play. The route came into his leverage. It reminded me of the play he had during the preseason scrimmage. You see the ball judge, you see the tracking, and I think it was appropriate that he finish the game. This guy’s doing a lot of jobs for us. He’s literally playing five positions, and he’s calling the defense. We’re asking a lot of him so when I say he made an error, the error’s really on me for asking him to do so much. He was fantastic in the game.”

On the first-half stops on defense:

“We’re coming together, that’s the way we expect to play around here. It’s not easy because the teams we’re playing are really, really good. You see what Dallas is doing, what Kansas City is doing. These guys are real opponents, and that was a real opponent that we just played. But our guys are coming together. We’re finding that sweet spot within the game plan of getting these guys into comfort zones. Our guys were in comfort zones tonight and we executed that way. That was a big step for us tonight. I’ve talked about the discovery process, and we’re unpacking a lot every week.”

On the ‘fast’ approach to start the game:

“It was important. The way the game started with the delay, I felt like our guys showed really good composure. When we came out at the beginning of the game, what you’re seeing is, ‘Hey, what’s our level of execution after a circumstance like that?’ I liked the way that we executed. Our first drive on offense was a premium drive. That’s always a great way to start the game; when you get the ball, have a 12-play drive that ends in a touchdown. That was a big confidence builder. And then we followed up with a three and out. Now, you’ve got your cleats in the grass as a team, and you’re playing ball. That start was definitely a winning edge tonight.”

On the AFC West standings:

“It’s so early. What’s expressed itself through four weeks is that the AFC West is loaded. We’ve got four really, really good teams in the West. It’s one of those divisions where a lot of good football is being played. There are a lot of good coaches, and there’s a lot of premium plays, a lot of good quarterbacks, and really good defenses. As the season goes on, it’s going to be one of the premium divisions in football.”

On the decision to challenge:

“So much of it is during the week; being a team of teams and making sure you’re surrounded by really quality people. Starting with our analytics of [Offensive Assistant] Dan Shamash and [Director of Football Research & Analytics] Aditya Krishnan up in the box who do fantastic work for us. And then our coordinators, myself, [Offensive Coordinator] Joe [Lombardi], [Defensive Coordinator] Renaldo [Hill], [Special Teams Coordinator] Derius [Swinton II] being really connected and having our plan before the game starts. Having a really good idea of how we’re going to play this game. But I think the flow of communication through four games has been really good. We’ve been able to operate the way we want to, on our terms. I tip my cap to those guys up in the box on that challenge. I felt like he was short. When the play started, I was like, ‘Okay, we got a good down.’ And then [DL] Linval [Joseph] had him, and I was like, ‘He kind of fell.’ It looked to me like he was short, but then Shamash up in the box was very quick, and I was able to get that challenge out quickly before the next play. We were able to get it to review which was huge because then you force a punt. Then, we got the score before the half. Those are the things when I say, ‘A team of teams.’ It’s not just me, it’s us. It was the team upstairs that helped us do it.”

On offensive line’s run blocking:

“[Raiders Defensive Line Coach] Rob Marinelli does a heck of a job coaching, he’s one of the best defensive line coaches in the history of the game. They’re really coming together. I just have a lot of respect for those coaches over there, [Raiders Linebackers Coach] Richard Smith and those linebackers; Denzel [Perryman], Cory Littleton and K.J. Wright. That’s a good front seven. I felt like we would have to do that in the game to take pressure off the pass-protection. When that team rushes the passer and they know it’s passed, they’re a tough team to block. What the run game did for us was give us balance. The physicality of the game showed up late in the game. We were able to possess the ball and certainly run it in at the end of the game. I’m pleased and there’s a lot of work to do. There’s an illusion in the NFL; we had plenty of negative runs that we have to shore up. Some advantage looks where we can get the ball to the perimeter. But our guys came off the ball tonight and I was excited.”

On the weather delay:

“We got the news from the league, and we just said, ‘Hey guys, this is going to be a chapter in our books – a weather delay in a domed stadium. This is new.’ What we did was try to give our guys a timeline because they were ready to go. The big thing was saying, ‘Okay, let’s chill out. Let’s get back in our zone, back in our rhythm.’ And then the officials gave me the go-ahead of what the actual timeline was in terms of going out to warming up, going right to the National Anthem, and playing. I felt that [Director of Sports Performance] Anthony Lomando did an excellent job of keeping our guys loose in there. We got the music back and got back into our zone. It felt like there was good communication. That’s just part of the NFL – that’s part of life. Being able to roll with it. I felt like our guys did a good job. On the field, a good edge for us was that we had a good warm up out there. [Director of Sports Performance Anthony] Lomando got them warmed up, then we switched to the position groups. I saw our guys loosen back up, like they were ready to play. They handled that very well.”

On the Raiders crowd noise:

“We’re ready for everything. Our guys handled it well, we were ready for it, but we were excited about those Powder Blues in there.”

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS QUARTERBACK JUSTIN HERBERT**On his poise during the final drive:**

“I felt we ran the ball really well. We were running the ball well all night, especially behind those guys getting back the ball, getting some of those first downs. I thought that was big for us.”

On the significance of the win:

“It’s huge because we bounced back after a big win against Kansas City last week, but it’s always about the next week. It’s always about the next opportunity. We play an incredible Browns team next week and it’s all about them. We’re going to enjoy this one for a little bit but show up to work tomorrow and watch the film.”

On Head Coach Brandon Staley trusting the offense in fourth-down scenarios:

"It's awesome that he believes in us because everyone in the huddle believes in each other, too. Whenever we get into one of those situations, we know that we've got the right play. We know that we've got the right guys. We just have to go out there and execute it. [TE] Jared [Cook] made some big plays on those fourth downs. Without him, maybe we don't make those plays, but it was huge to see from him."

On the run game:

"We really believe in those guys up front. [G] Oday [Aboushi], [C] Corey [Linsley], [G] Matt [Feiler], [T] Rashawn [Slater] and [T] Storm [Norton], they did a great job today. Whenever you've got a guy like [RB Austin] Ek [Ekeler] in the backfield, [RB] Larry Rountree [III] and [RB] Justin Jackson, you've got to find ways to get them the ball. I thought [RB Austin] Ek [Ekeler] did a great job catching passes, too, and so did [RB Justin] JJ [Jackson]. Those guys just change our offense and it's great to see that from them."

On if defensive achievements 'fuel' the offense:

"I think it's huge. Football is a three-phase game, and as well as they were playing, our offense needed to take advantage of great field position from those three-and-outs. I thought they did an incredible job holding an incredible offense to only a few yards in the first half. Our defense played great and got us the ball back. It's up to us to go down and score."

On what he loves the most about his team:

"I love that we take it week by week. I really believe in the guys in this locker room. But it's all about each week of preparation. We never look too far ahead, we never look back. You can't let Dallas beat you again and you can't let the Chiefs win. You can't let that hold you back. It's all about this next week of preparation and I know guys in that locker room attack every week like it's nothing, so it's awesome."

On how the team has improved on since last year:

"That's one of those games that we might not have won last year. But it's great to see the defense go out there and hold them down and the offense going down and scoring. It's great when you can lead the game at a two-score possession. I thought it was big for us to go down and score. The defense played well all night, so huge props to them."

On going for it on fourth-and-two:

"That's just one of those tempo plays where we kind of go unbalanced and try to get up on the ball quickly and see what the defense is in. Thankfully, we got the look that we wanted and [TE] Jared [Cook] ran a great route, got up field and converted the fourth down."

On his thoughts in targeting TE Jared Cook for the first down:

"Just so he can turn it up and go. Just giving him a ball that he can catch, turn up and get two yards. It doesn't have to be a pretty ball by any means, but something that he can catch and something he can turn up and run with."

On the 'big moments' of the game:

"I believe in those guys, especially [Head] Coach [Brandon] Staley believes in us, and I believe in this offense. When you've got guys like [WR] Mike Williams, [WR] Keenan [Allen], [TE] Jared Cook, they're going to make plays. You have to find ways to get them the ball. I thought we did a great job at that tonight."

On red zone improvements:

"I think an emphasis on it; each week going into each week and knowing that we've got to put up points in the red zone. We can't leave with field goals. Field goals are great, but points are better. I think we've got too many weapons to not score in the red zone. Getting those guys the ball, getting [WR] Mike Williams, [WR] Keenan [Allen], [TE] Jared Cook, all those guys involved because they really expand our offense."

On RB Austin Ekeler's wheel route:

"That's just one of those plays that you have to feel out and depending on where the linebacker attaches leverage. Ek is such a great receiving back out of the backfield, we've always got a mismatch with him. Finding ways to get him the ball and he makes a great catch. It's good to see from him."

On playing through crowd noise:

“We’re so thankful for the Chargers fans that showed up, but I think it’s a great opportunity to go out there and play a really good football team. On third down, I thought we executed well. We left a couple out there, but there’s a lot of film to watch and a lot of stuff to get better from.”

On the defense:

“As well as the defense played early on, we need to take advantage of that. When we get good field position, we need to be able to score. We need to be able to push the ball downfield. I thought we did a great job getting going. In the second half, we need to do a better job, but the defense stepped up big time today.”

On if he puts his hands up to his helmet to cover his ears and hear the play call:

“It’s covering your ears so you can hear the microphone in your helmet, yes.”

On Head Coach Brandon Staley’s decision to go for it twice on fourth down:

“I think he believes in our offense just like we believe in each other. But being aggressive and using some of the data to our advantage is the best of both worlds. I think Coach Staley has done a great job communicating with us. We’ve got a good feel for it and when we’re out there, we feel comfortable. We know that we’ve got the right personnel out there, so we just have to execute.”

On Staley’s trust in the offense:

“I’m just thankful that he believes in us like we believe in each other. So, those opportunities, until we don’t start converting them, I think that’s when issues start coming up.”

On if he expects to be aggressive on fourth down:

“I think with the talent that we have; I really believe in those guys. As well as we distribute the ball around the field, I think we’ve always got matchups that we like. So, taking advantage of those fourth-and-shorts – obviously, we have to be smart about field position – but I think it’s great to be aggressive.”

On S Derwin James Jr.’s performance tonight:

“I thought it was huge. It’s great to have him back and he’s been playing so well. We definitely missed him last year. He’s one of those vocal leaders that have stepped up for the defense. I’m such a big fan of him because he makes us better even when we practice. All of fall camp, he made us better. It’s just great to see him out there.”

On how impressed he is with James:

“I was really impressed with him last year. It’s probably fair to say I’m even more impressed this year. He’s just such a dynamic player and the way [Head] Coach [Brandon] Staley moves him around on defense, he’s able to do so much. He really is one of the smartest players that I’ve ever been around. It’s really impressive.”

On the resiliency of the offense:

“I think it’s belief, looking at each other in the huddle and knowing that we’ve got the right guys out there. Knowing the situation and understanding that we’ve got the right guys, we’ve got the right play calls, we know what we’re doing. We just need to execute it. All those drills. All those four-minute drills, two-minute drills that we do during practice, during the week, it shows up in game time. The toughest part of the week is practice and going through that grind of watching film and doing all that, so when you go out there on Sunday, you play free.”

On if he was surprised about the weather delay:

“I was a little surprised. I thought our team did a great job of not letting it limit our distractions. We kept focus. The entire time we were in the locker room, we were focused and dialed in and ready to get back out there.”

On the weather delay:

“There were some questions as to why, but thankfully, we had people come in and educate us on that. So, it was great to hear.”

LAS VEGAS RAIDERS HEAD COACH JON GRUDEN

On how they slowed down the Chargers offense:

"I don't know if we slowed them down enough. We may have slowed [WR] Mike Williams down, but we didn't stop them enough. That's the big thing."

On defending QB Justin Herbert:

"He's a good quarterback. They have a heck of an offense. They have a lot of weapons. They have a lot of different kinds of plays and he can execute. He is a special talent."

On Raiders CB Trayvon Mullen Jr.:

"We lost a couple of corners. [Raiders CB Damon] Arnette went out. Mullen went out. [Raiders CB] Nate Hobbs went out at the end of the game. I'll have an update at the end of the week."

On the Raiders fans:

"It's always great to have the support of the Raiders fans and we are sorry we let them down. We cannot come out and take that many punches in the first round. I'm proud of our guys for showing the toughness to get up and keep fighting, but that was ridiculous tonight. They got on us and they got after us on all three phases. We found a way to make it a football game and to give ourselves a chance, but it's just too hard in this league against good teams."

On if he is 'frustrated with the Raiders or in admiration of the Chargers':

"I think it's a combination of a lot of things. You can't deny the Chargers are a good football team. They are an excellent team. They proved it again tonight. They're going to go places this year. They are going to be a force to be dealt with. We had penalties that were ridiculous, we gave up some plays in the passing game that you can't give up. We didn't play well in the first half."

On what it will take to get the defense ready for other teams:

"We're going to have to play better in all areas, not just defense. It will help if [Trayvon] Mullen [Jr.] and [Damon] Arnette and some of our guys were out there helping us, but I'm not going to make any excuses. They went for it in some critical fourth downs. I give credit. Backed up in their own territory in a tight football game. They converted some critical plays on fourth down twice. They went all out tonight to make plays and they did."

On his halftime message to the team:

"It was one of the greatest speeches of all time, let's just leave it at that. You don't want to know what I said before the game because everything didn't work, either."

On TE Darren Waller's taunting penalty:

"I don't understand taunting. I hate taunting. I think it's ridiculous. I think what happens after an interception or a touchdown, we allow these celebrations that I consider taunting. I don't understand what happened over there on the Chargers side, but the official made the call and we have to deal with it. We couldn't get any momentum going and that didn't help us."

On injuries:

"We had a lot of guys go down. [Raiders RB Josh] Jacobs went out, [Raiders RB Peyton Barber] went out. [Raiders TE Derek] Carrier was unable to play. We lost a lot in our three tight end set. But, they lost some players, too. We're all going to have to deal with that. Hopefully we can get some guys ready, we have a short week. Have to get back home and get ready. I'm proud of our team. I'm going to reiterate that. We're 3-1 and we have had some overtime tough victories and we fought back and put ourselves in position to make a dramatic comeback tonight. We just didn't make the plays."

On driving to tie the game:

"Second-and-five, we gave the ball to Josh [Jacobs]. We didn't get much. I think we got a yard-and-a-half or so. On third down, they played good defense. We missed a long range field goal. We had two plays that we liked going in, we had a good roll going, two back-to-back touchdown drives. Unfortunately, we didn't really get a chance after that."

On WR Hunter Renfrow:

“He’s something else. I’m proud of all of our players, I really am. I wish I could answer all your questions, but I’ve never had an indoor stadium with a lighting delay. This was a bizarre night for all of us.”

On the defensive line’s performance:

“There’s some good things we will take out of this game. There are some things we have to learn. We have to straighten out the openers. We have to straighten out the first quarter. That we will start working on as soon as I get out of here.”

On the weather delay:

“I’m not an engineer. I have no idea. I have never heard of that and I thought it was a joke. It affected both teams. Certainly, the locker room here is the most bizarre thing I’ve ever seen. You can’t see anybody, it’s like a maze. Whoever contorted this visiting room locker room, I’d like to meet this guy and see what his idea was.”

On how the weather delay impacted the game:

“It didn’t.”

On if the Raiders are ‘playoff contenders’:

“I’m not going to get all deep and philosophical and make a bunch of predictions. You saw the game. We got beat pretty soundly in the first half and we came back and we showed some football character. We had a lot of that, we are going to lean on that and continue to learn. We have some injuries we need to learn about. We need to get ready for the [Chicago] Bears on a short week. Your feelings are going to get hurt in this league sometimes and certainly ours are hurt right now. Thank you, guys.”

LAS VEGAS RAIDERS QUARTERBACK DEREK CARR**On QB Justin Herbert:**

“He’s a good decision-maker. That’s usually what the better quarterbacks in this league do, make good decisions. I’ve always thought he’s a really good player. He’s growing, he’s still young, he’s still learning, he still has throws that he wishes he had back like any quarterback, but that’s football. I think the future is really bright for him.”

On the final two plays of the drive to tie the game:

“I can’t remember the actual call on the run, but I remember the play. Then the pass where there was the sack, honestly, [TE Darren] Waller was running so fast that he left his guy in the window for Renfrow, and I couldn’t throw it because that dude was there, so I went to Waller, and by the time I was going through my progression, I tried to scramble, the stunt, I tried to spin it out of it, and it was too late. That’s just what happened.”

On losing:

“It’s better now than later. If anything, I think this hopefully wakes us up a little bit. I think we needed to start a lot faster, if I’m honest. We started the season great, but we don’t start games nearly good enough yet, and I think that’s something we need to be better at. You never want to lose, but it’s hard to win in this league. We’ll see them again.”

On if the Raiders were ‘playing with fire’ in the last three games:

“I don’t know. Each game is different. Different schemes, different plays, different outcomes. For me, this whole time, I thought we were going to win the game. There was some stuff that we hadn’t even got to yet in the first half. I was like, ‘Man, I can’t wait for this play, that play.’ It’s just how the flow of the game was. It was just weird, it was just different. You have to give credit to their defensive coaches. Their players played extremely hard. They did a great job. I don’t want to make it all about us, but that’s football. You always make it all about you. What can we do better? We’ll take a look at that. Playing with fire and all that, I’m not even going to — not in a bad way, I can’t help you write that, but in my head, it’s just different every game. We haven’t started out fast in every game, so it’s something we definitely need to look at.”

On the greatest obstacle to overcome:

“We have to be consistent. Going into a hostile place, I thought we went into Pittsburgh, and I felt like we were more ready to play at the beginning of the game in Pittsburgh. Came here, it wasn’t really a hostile place. It was more of a home game like we thought it would be. For us to just keep going forward, we just need to be consistent. We can’t have any big guys or anything like that, just play football. We got some moving parts that you know we’re trying to help everyone as a unit go forward and the expectation never changes. The expectation is to win every game and we didn’t do that today, and it’s all my fault.”

On starting the game slow:

“There are some things that, respectfully, privately I’ll share, but, yeah, absolutely, there is. And I’ll do that privately. It’s nothing I need to do in front of a microphone. That’s not my style “

On the weather delay:

“It wasn’t just a different start. Mentally, I thought we were ready to go coming out, but I can’t speak for everybody. For me, I do the same thing regardless. Ten minutes before we go out, and then when we hit the field. In my eight years of gaming the process of doing things every week, for me, it didn’t change anything, except when we came out, we had to go back in. I hadn’t had I think a weather delay since my rookie year in the preseason. That was different, especially with a roof.”

On facing pressure from the Chargers defensive front:

“Same as every game. It’s the NFL. Pass rushers are different in college. I think they had a few sacks. They had some good plays, just like some other teams have had. Some good plays, a few sacks. But I think once we settled down a little bit and just communicated, I thought we were able to move the ball, and that stuff has a way of working itself out.”

On if ‘struggling to run the ball puts more pressure on the pass protection’:

“Absolutely. It’s hard. If you ever go to training camp and watch one-on-on pass rush, it’s a tough drill for an offensive lineman. It’s not easy. When the best athletes in the world know it’s a pass, it makes it hard. But I thought that we had spurts where we ran it well, and it helped our O-line and with play-action and stuff like that. We have ways of helping those guys out. We have ways of doing some things and making it a little bit easier on them, but you never want to take away from what they did. I don’t want to take away from what they did. Their D-line did a great job, and we have to be better this week because we have the Bears coming into town. They’re pretty good up front, too.”

On if he is ‘disappointed’ following the loss:

“Absolutely. I’m a Raiders fan even though I play for the team. I want to see us win every time. Any loss is disappointing. This one hurts a little bit extra. They can blame me. They can put it all on me if they want. If they want to chant for me when I run out, they can get mad at me for this one.”

On TE Darren Waller:

“There was an early third down where he was wide open and I was going to throw it to him. Honestly, there were 50, 60 yards or something like that and he probably would have gotten another 30, 40 out of that. It would have been a different feeling for him I guess. I think it was when [OLB] Joey Bosa hit the ball as I was throwing it, but then they had nobody on him. That was a big one. There was another one later in the game where I ended up going to I think, I don’t remember who ran the route, but to the under route, and I couldn’t see Darren. They had dropped him again. After I threw it, the D-line moved and I could see him. I was like, there was another huge play for him. I’m fully confident in what we are doing. I’m fully confident in what he’s doing, in what [Head] Coach [Jon Gruden] is able to do with him to get him open. We just didn’t connect on those two.”

On if he was under more duress more tonight than in previous games:

“I don’t think so. I thought it was the same. I think our offensive line was battling. They did a great job. I was still able to throw the heck out of the ball and when I throw it a lot and try to take deep shots and take shots and all those kinds of things, sacks and all that. Pressures are going to happen. It’s the NFL. I don’t think it was. It honestly didn’t feel any different from last time.”

On WR Hunter Renfrow's tackle on the Chargers' fake punt attempt:

"I thought that was an amazing play. Even if the guy caught it, he was short. It just showed you the kind of football player he is. I think he's one of the best football players in the NFL. I think he's a special talent and for him to make that play, if you go win that game, you look back like, 'Wow, what a play.' That kind of thing. I was very impressed by that."

On his touchdown pass to Waller:

"He was the fourth option on that. I was going through my progression. They doubled Hunter [Renfrow]. We had a couple back lines that as I was looking, I started to feel [Darren] Waller one-on-one, breaking out. When that guy's defender, his back was to me, I can give Waller a chance to go make a play. Same thing I tried to do on the interception. Especially when you're down two scores, I try to force balls. I hate to be in that situation but same thing, I try to force it. [S] Derwin [James Jr.] got his head around and the other one, I was able to throw it and Waller went up and got it. There's a fine line with that kind of stuff but any situation like that, whenever you get that chance with their back to you, you always try to take a chance. If you can see it, you want to take that chance. The touchdown to him I thought was a heck of a catch. He took it, snatched it away, great fundamentals. It was really impressive."

On WR Henry Ruggs III being a reliable deep threat:

"Yeah, absolutely. He's proven it throughout the offseason and training camp. He has worked really hard, not only physically but his mentality, I've talked about it a lot coming into this season. He comes up to me, he talks to me during games. He's like, 'If we get this look and I can cut,' and I literally come and show him something during the game like, 'I'm going to hit you on this later.' He goes, 'No problem.' He was there and made a big play. It's just really impressive and really fun to have."