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## Chargers Week 5 Media Availability

Wednesday, October 5, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

### HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

#### **On WR Keenan Allen's injury status:**

"No new news. I don't think that he will be at practice today. He's still recovering, still day-to-day, but I don't think you'll see him at practice today."

#### **On if Allen 'will remain day-to-day this week':**

"Staying day-by-day."

#### **On TE Donald Parham Jr.'s injury status:**

"Encouraged. He will be full in practice today."

#### **On last year's game against the Browns and if he 'anticipates' Sunday's game to be similar:**

"We'll see how it goes. They have a good football team. It's a road game, and it's going to be a challenging environment. We're going to be ready to play."

#### **On the Browns' defensive line without DE Myles Garrett and DE Jadeveon Clowney:**

"Like any D-line that doesn't have two of the top players in the league. It's tough when you have two guys that are number one overall picks that are missing from your team, but they have played good defense without them. They have good depth on their defense. Myles [Garrett] and Jadeveon [Clowney] are one of the top edge tandems of the league. They are both outstanding players. In the run and pass, they are very disruptive. They are both long, big, fast. We're going to have our work cut out for us."

#### **On Browns RB Nick Chubb:**

"He plays with outstanding pace. He can really see the game and really pace the blocking scheme. I think he sets up his blocks really well. He's just a very tough tackle because of how he is built. He has a really strong lower body. He can shrink his surface, where he becomes even thicker and smaller. Then, he has really good speed. He was a track guy in high school. He's a lot faster back than you would think, too, because he's such a big back. He's outstanding at breaking away from people. You see a lot of the long runs on the movie. A very complete running back."

#### **On defending Chubb 'outside of the tackles':**

"Try not to let him get there [*laughter*]. You're on to something, that's where a lot of the big runs happen. Normally, it's because they are forcing the defensive back to tackle him. A lot of those big runs are coming from outside the tackle box. They do a really good job of scheming him to get there."

**On the Browns' rushing attack with 'two premier running backs':**

"I think the way that you're seeing the modern NFL is that you are trying to search for tandems. You're searching for three, if you can; maybe a tandem to run the ball, and then a third-down, all-purpose back that can do a little bit of everything. Certainly, that's the goal when you're designing a running back group. I think they were fortunate to get [Browns RB] Kareem [Hunt] because Kareem is a starting running back in the NFL. He was a starting running back in Kansas City. He's an outstanding player, too. They are very deep in that group. Last year, they were deep. I think you saw last year, the way they played at running back. [Browns RB] D'Ernest Johnson, I can remember in the Denver game last year, in the night game where he was the player of the game in that game. He had like over 100 yards rushing. They run the ball very well. All of their backs touch the ball. They are very prolific doing so."

**On the challenge of defending Browns Head Coach Kevin Stefanski's run scheme:**

"There are a lot of gaps in the running game. [Stefanski] plays with a lot of tight ends. [Browns Offensive Line Coach] Bill Callahan, being the line coach, if you take a look at where Bill has been, wherever he's been — the Jets, Cowboys, Washington, here — they utilize big people in order to run the ball, which isn't normal in today's NFL, where everything is getting smaller, three-receiver groupings. They go the opposite way. They are very proficient running the ball with bigger guys in the game. They have a lot of variety in terms of how they run the ball. Then, they have the backs — not only is the scheme good, but then the backs that are hard to tackle. You put that all together and you have a difficult running scheme to defend."

**On the 'variance' in the Browns' offensive scheme compared to the system Stefanski ran in Minnesota:**

"With [former Vikings Offensive Coordinator] Gary [Kubiak], they were more zone-oriented, where, now, they have a little bit more variety in how they deploy the run schemes. It just gives them more options, I think and makes them more challenging to defend."

**On the 75-yard touchdown run against the Texans last week:**

"There were a lot of culprits on that play, starting on the edge of our defense. If you take a look at that play, we have an unblocked defender. The corner, [S] Derwin [James Jr.] kind of fit outside. We prefer him to fit inside there. Then, between Cov [DL Christian Covington] on the back side and Nas [S Nasir Adderley], we didn't take a good angle there. That was a team-oriented explosion run, starting with myself. We have to do better than that because we, obviously, had the momentum in that game, and then, you get a one-punch like that — and you're playing really well in the run front, we played really well in the run — one run like that can make you feel a lot different about your performance. I have to do a better job coaching."

**On is CB Asante Samuel Jr. 'was the right fit inside' on the run:**

"No, he should be outside and Derwin [James Jr.] should be inside. When the number one receiver blocks, he cracks the support. Now, you have the corner free, so Derwin can be aggressive to the inside of the play."

**On OLB Chris Rumph II's performance on the run:**

"He wasn't expecting the crack. They had not shown that. Kind of a surprise, good design by them."

**On 'similarities' between the run last week and the touchdown run against the Jaguars and Week 3:**

"No. The Jacksonville one was different. Kansas City was more similar, perimeter run support."

**On additional players that he 'expects not to practice' today:**

"All of the other guys from last week — [C] Corey [Linsley], [CB] J.C. [Jackson], [DL] Sebastian [Joseph-Day], they will all practice full. The only guy that we're going to add to the injury report today is [K] Dustin Hopkins. He had a quad, kind of felt some tightness there. Going to put him on the injury report."

**On TE Donald Parham Jr.:**

"He's made a lot of big plays for us. For those of you that were here last year, you know his run-after-catch, whether it was keeper screens. The vertical element, whether it is outside as a receiver or at the tight end position in the seams, he can do a lot with the ball in his hands. Last year, what we discovered, kind of by accident, is that he's a pretty darn good blocker, too, for being a former basketball player and at his height. He did a really good job for us blocking, as well. We're excited to get him back. He has worked really hard to get back."

**On Hopkins' tackle on a kickoff last week and if he 'wants the kicker to be that aggressive there':**

"Dustin [Hopkins] has really earned his stripes in our locker room because he has that athlete vibe of a kicker. I know that he's not scared to mix it up [*laughter*]. He's probably more eager than most. We would prefer it not to get there, but it's good to know that you have an athlete back there. The thing about him and [P] JK [Scott], they're both good athletes. If it gets there, you at least know that you have a chance."

**On if the 'quad tightness' is 'in his kicking leg':**

"I don't know that. Just a quad. He kind of felt something the other day, unrelated to the game. Just some tightness."

**On if the team will 'bring in' a kicker:**

"It's a possibility, but it wouldn't happen, I think, until tomorrow."

**On if QB Justin Herbert 'is feeling good':**

"I wouldn't say that [*laughter*]. I'm going to let Justin [Herbert] speak for himself on that. Again, not commenting on how he feels. The practice week, getting back into a flow, that's what we're trying to do, keep establishing that good rhythm of getting his practice, his timing. Better that way."

**On if Herbert will throw today in practice:**

"I believe so."

**On his 'favorite thing' about WR Mike Williams:**

"[He is] one of my favorites, for sure. I think Mike [Williams] has the ability to make really tough plays in many ways. When you may think that he's covered or there's traffic, I think Mike really isn't covered. I think that's a rare quality in a receiver. He can give you that friendly target deep, intermediate and short, where you feel like you don't have to be perfect with the ball. As a quarterback, that's a great feeling, knowing that you don't have to be perfect, you don't have to be precise, every single time. He gives you a target where he can go help you and make a play. I think that's a big trait of his. We have got the most unselfish superstar wide receiver tandem in the NFL. What he's willing to do for us, I just love the way that he plays. I love the way he practices. He's just willing to do all the little things, him and [WR] Keenan [Allen]. I think they're a rare tandem that way. I don't know if I've ever been around a tandem, or seen a tandem, just as unselfish and team-oriented as they are, who are as productive as they are. What you see from Mike, and I think that we said it last year throughout the year, and then after the season, is that I still feel like he is improving. I feel like he's improving as an NFL player. I know the chemistry with him and Justin [Herbert] is improving. You know how we play when he gets the ball. We're a better team when Mike gets the ball. That's the facts. We're just going to keep working at it with him, but we're lucky to have them, for sure."

**On Herbert and Williams having success in road games:**

"Those players, specifically, working together, they just have real poise. A lot of times, you guys see star receivers get emotional about touches and the plan and how it's going throughout the game, you just don't see our guys do that. They trust Justin [Herbert], they trust [Offensive Coordinator] Joe [Lombardi], they believe in one another and they're happy for one another. That poise and that calm, I think it really gives us an advantage because we never feel like we have to force it to them. I think that's a very comforting feeling as a quarterback, as a play caller, as a head coach, that you don't feel like you have to force this, or he's going to be unhappy. What that allows us to do is play team offense, which is very important."

**On the Browns' secondary:**

"They're very talented. They have a lot of good players. Their corner tandem, first-round picks. [Browns CB] Denzel [Ward], earning that big contract. Then, [Browns CB] Greg Newsome. They drafted a rookie, [Browns CB Martin] Emerson [Jr.]. Then, they have [Browns CB] Greedy Williams, who was a high pick. In the back end, at safety, they're deep. [Browns S Grant] Delpit, a high pick. [Browns S] John Johnson [III], who I coached, who is as good as anybody in the pros. They're deep in the secondary, a very complete group."

**On 'why it hasn't materialized' for the Browns' secondary:**

"I can't comment on that. We have a lot of respect for them. Sometimes, it takes time or whatever, but they're a very quality group. They're tough to play against, that's for sure."

**On if Cleveland 'is a difficult place to play:**

"Oh, year. It's one of the top American sports cities there is. Tough environment. It's a place that loves football. Any place you go where they love their football, it's going to be hard."

**On preparing the team for 'playing in a tough road environment':**

"Get the right guys on your team that know how to play on the road. That's what we have. We have guys that can go play anywhere and try to be ready for it. I think our group does a good job of playing in adverse situations. The way you have to do that is you have to have the right guys, and then you have to have that belief in one another. That's what we have on our team. That's why we feel like we can go into these tough environments and go compete at a high level."

**On if G Matt Feiler 'is dealing with something physically that is impacting his play':**

"Not physically. I know that we're not disappointed with Matt [Feiler]. Like our offense in general, I think that we're working progress. Those guys finding that chemistry, I think that's at the forefront of what we're trying to get to, really in all phases of our team. We have the utmost confidence in him. He's so solid for us. We're going to continue to keep working with him. We're glad we have them. Like him, myself and everybody, we're working to improve."

**On Browns QB Jacoby Brissett:**

"Jacoby [Brissett] is a quality player in this league. He has started in several places, and there is a reason for that. I know that in 2019, when I was in Denver, he was the starter in Indianapolis that year. When we played him, it was a tough game. [Former Broncos OLB and current Bills OLB] Von Miller came in there at the end of the game, unblocked, and couldn't get him down, and he completed a big 50-yard pass. They ended up kicking a field goal to beat us in two-minute. It was 13-12 at the time. He has real poise. If you've watched him play this season, you can see that the team believes in him. He's a big, strong quarterback, an athletic quarterback. I've known about him since he was [William T.] Dwyer High School in Palm Beach [Fla.]. He was an outstanding basketball player. He was a really quality player at NC State. He looks like a starting quarterback. He's six-foot-five, 240 [pounds], 245-plus. He can make every throw that you would hope for, as a quarterback. He's athletic and he's really sharp. If you follow this guy, he has a lot of starting qualities. You're seeing him play like that with him. He's certainly not a backup quarterback, he's a guy who is a starter in this league. You can see it by the way that they call the game."

**On 'limiting' Brissett's 'designed roll-outs':**

"Just have to have edges in the pocket. Your edge players have to play well. That's important against a quarterback like him. If your edge players play well, then the middle of your pocket has to come alive. When it moves like that, you have to move with it."

**On the last time he was at FirstEnergy Stadium:**

"The last time I was at this stadium I was at The Holy War — [Cleveland St.] Ignatius versus St. Ed's [Lakewood St. Edward] — recruiting."

**On growing up in Perry, Ohio — a suburb of Cleveland — and if he ever 'dreamed of coaching' at FirstEnergy Stadium:**

"That was always my dream. I went to games at the old stadium. I have not seen a [Browns] game live at the new stadium. I know that it's right on the lake and that it is a great venue, for sure. With their franchise, in the last couple of years, they've really improved. Those fans are going to come alive when they have a team to root for. Right now, they have a team that is a quality team. They're improving. They're one of the top teams in the AFC. It's going to be an intense environment, for sure."