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## Chargers Training Camp Media Availability

Wednesday, August 3, 2022 ⚡ Jack Hammett Sports Complex ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

### HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

#### **On TE Donald Parham Jr.'s performance thus far in camp:**

"A lot of improvement as a player, just becoming a complete tight end in the league. I know that our quarterbacks have an enormous amount of confidence in him. He's shown to make a lot of big plays in the passing game. I think that he improves as a blocker every time out there. It just gives us a lot of flexibility in how we can play. He's had a very good camp. I'm really proud of him."

#### **On Parham Jr. getting 'more integrated' in the offense:**

"I felt like last year he was a big part of our offense. He was one of our leaders in yards after the catch and was really having a quality season for us. We felt like coming here, when we first got here, I know that our offensive staff — [Offensive Coordinator] Joe Lombardi, [Tight Ends Coach] Kevin Koger, his position coach — we felt like this guy could have a big role. I felt like that was really starting to happen last year. Now, just having a full year with him, going into this camp, we have a very good idea of how to utilize him best. Like I said, he's off to a great start. He's been awesome this offseason. As you guys know, he's worked extremely hard to get to this point. I'm really proud of him, for sure."

#### **On an update on S Derwin James Jr.'s contract situation:**

"No update yet on Derwin, other than, 'Happy Birthday, Derwin' [*laughter*]. It's his birthday today."

#### **On 'several players not participating in the team periods today':**

"By design. [G] Matt [Feiler], [C] Corey [Linsley], [OLB] Khalil [Mack], Kyle [Van Noy] or [OLB] Joey [Bosa] and [WR] Keenan [Allen], just rest."

#### **On K Dustin Hopkins not participating in the field goal period today:**

"Same thing, rest day. He kicked a bunch yesterday."

#### **On the intensity of practices:**

"It's where it should be through seven practices. You have to build these guys up. You have to build a foundation in pads. I felt like we had two really good days in pads. Then, came back down here in the red area — a really short practice, get an off day, and then come back and have a lot of quality work, then finishing with a scrimmage. That third day, they're ready to really compete and have a lot of plays and really build some wind. More drives, more substitutions and having to play longer. We're in that process of building them up."

#### **On WR Maurice Ffrench 'going down at the end of practice':**

"Maurice is OK. Guys competing, probably, a little bit too close. We're thankful that he's OK. That's the thing, you have to keep learning how to practice with one another because everybody wants to make a good impression, but you have to make sure that you keep people safe. That was one where it was a close call, but he's OK. We'll learn from that, for sure."

**On if S Nasir Adderley secured an interception on the play that Ffrench 'went down':**

"He did pick it off. Really big-time break by him. Great play."

**On his evaluation of the offense through seven practices:**

"A much more confident unit than it was a year ago. They have very good operation and chemistry. It starts up front, the confidence that that group has playing together. They're playing physical up front, a clean operation, and they're blocking good players. I can really see how they're playing together. I think the skill players are very sure of who they're playing with. I think we're able to call a much larger menu of plays for these guys, specifically for these guys. [QB] Justin [Herbert] has improved so much, too. They're a tough cover. I knew that last year in camp. Each and every day, I was like, 'Hey, this is a tough cover.' But, now, it's so much tougher because they know have an ever further command of the system. Now, they're able to play even more confidently. Really excited about where they're at, and they have to continue to improve."

**On Adderley creating takeaways:**

"I told you guys at the end of minicamp that I thought that he was a real bright spot, a stand out. You ask for that, and I feel like he definitely earned that mantle, and he's earning it in camp here. He's really flashing in the run game and in the passing game. Little things: command before the ball is snapped, helping his teammates out. Without Derwin [James Jr.] being out there, you're able to feel that more, that quarterback presence. That's something that you need at safety, it can't be a one-man show. He's off to a good start. We expect him to continue to play that way."

**On the injury statuses of DB Mark Webb Jr., CB Tevaughn Campbell, WR Jason Moore, TE Tre' McKitty and LB Drue Tranquill:**

"Drue's still working back. Those five guys, they're all of the soft-tissue nature. They're all day-to-day."

**On the inside linebacker group:**

"There are a lot of guys competing for spots. I think that running back is a position that people are looking at as being a competitive position group, and I think inside linebacker will be competitive, as well. Special teams is going to factor a lot into that equation. We have a lot of guys that are young that are competing for roles, and we have some experienced guys who have played a lot of football in the league. Then, you're going to get back [LB Kenneth] Murray [Jr.] at some point. It's going to be very competitive. [Linebackers Coach] Mike Wilhoite and [Defensive Quality Control] Isaac Shewmaker are doing a good job coaching them. I think that they have a lot fuller command of our system. That's why you're seeing them play faster, more physical. A lot more complete inside linebackers. As we continue to tackle live against other people in the preseason, I think that you'll get an even better evaluation of those people."

**On what WR DeAndre Carter has displayed as a receiver thus far this camp:**

"You're seeing it well. He really got off to a good start with our quarterbacks in the springtime. He's a very good receiver. He's not just a return specialist. This guy can play offense — he can play in the slot, he can play out wide. He's very good after the catch. He can run with the football. We're glad to have him. He has fit in well with our football team. Really thankful that he's here."

**On 'how close' Murray is to returning:**

"Like I said, I'm hoping at some point during camp. We're not close yet, but he is improving and he's getting more and more confident. Our goal was just for him to be here at some point during camp. I think that that goal is achievable."

**On 'if anything jumped out about the running backs' upon film evaluation of the two padded practices earlier this week:**

"I think that there have been some bright spots in the run game and on special teams. I think that [RBs] Joshua Kelley, Isaiah [Spiller] and Larry [Rountree III], that group of guys, have really competed hard. Then, the other thing that stands out is that [RB] Austin [Ekeler] is having an outstanding camp. I don't ever want to take for granted a great player. He came in in really good shape. He's running the football extremely well, catching the football, lining up all over the place. He's in great shape, too, and really pushing those guys to keep up with him. Those guys have flashed. Pass protection, an element of that is who you're going to trust in protection, and they're going to continue to have to prove that, especially with the looks that they're seeing. It's ongoing."

**On WR Joshua Palmer:**

“He’s playing with a lot more confidence, a lot more physicality. I think that you can feel him more on the routes. He has a really good set-up. He’s 6-foot-1, 210 [pounds], so you can really feel him. He’s really strong. His route set-up, and then that physicality on the catches, is showing up. He can line up at different places. Our quarterbacks really trust him. He can beat press [coverage]. We feel like he’s a complete receiver. He needs to continue to improve. He has to earn it. He’s off to a good start. He’s much improved on special teams, too, which we need because he has the perfect body to be good at it.”

## **TIGHT END GERALD EVERETT**

### **On his ability to execute Jet Sweeps and be an asset in the screen game:**

"If I can contribute to the offense or the team, if I'm able to do it, then I think that it should be incorporated. I'd be happy to equip the offense with those types of things, whether it be jet sweep and screens or pass protection, it doesn't really matter. Just one of the few things I want to add to the dimensions they already have."

### **On his history with Jet Sweeps and screens:**

"I probably started taking my first jet sweeps, I want to say, my second year in the league. It's been something that I've wanted to keep building on. Ironically, I thought that was going to be something that was just with the Rams, but Seattle handed me some jet sweeps. Now that I'll take some more with the Chargers, I'm excited about it."

### **On QB Justin Herbert:**

"Justin is a great guy off the field. I met him off the field before we even started throwing passes in OTAs. I can't say enough about the guy. He's extremely humble. With him being as young as he is, the sky is the limit for him. He shows so much potential. Like you guys saw last year, thousands of yards in the passing game. He can scramble. He's kind of like a mesh of [former Seahawks and current Broncos QB] Russell Wilson and [former Rams and current Lions QB] Jared Goff. I was fortunate enough to be able to play with two great quarterbacks in Jared and Russ, and I feel like Justin is a mesh of both of those with height and the ability."

### **On developing a relationship with Herbert:**

"We're really trying to gel in any way that we can. I'm not really trying to force anything here, just letting it happen organically and letting Justin do the rest himself. Obviously, he's a great quarterback and a great person. He goes through his reads. With him being as big as he is, he can see the entire field with a three-step, five-step or seven-step [drop], it doesn't matter. I think Justin has a great feel for the game."

### **On TE Donald Parham Jr.:**

"Donald is a good guy, as well. He doesn't really talk much. It takes a minute for him to open up, but we're boys and I think we're going to continue to grow in our relationship. I think we're going to have a great tight end unit."

### **On Parham's size:**

"He's huge [*laughter*]. He's like LeBron [James] playing tight end. I definitely want to complement him and [TE] Tre' [McKitty]. We're going to have a great unit."

### **On his goals for the season:**

"I want to do better than I did last year. I think that should be a key component as you progress in this league, really with anything in life. You should try to eclipse yourself in the previous year and previous term. I want to show that I'm more of a complete player than last year."

### **On how he can achieve his goals:**

"That happens every day. Every day you get up and you look at yourself in the morning. You identify weaknesses in yourself and try to see what you can do best. I have a portrait of Michael Jordan and Muhammad Ali that I pass when I wake up in the morning and go down my steps, just to kind of really motivate me and give me something to reach for."

## **DEFENSIVE LINEMAN SEBASTIAN JOSEPH-DAY**

### **On the first week of training camp:**

“The last week has been fun. It’s been good being able to play with all of the guys, know how everyone plays, how [OLB] Khalil [Mack] and [OLB] Joey [Bosa] rushes, how [DL] Austin [Johnson] rushes. It’s been fun just building the cohesion of the team.”

### **On ‘if it’s been easy to get up to speed’ with Head Coach Brandon Staley’s defense:**

“Honestly, everything’s pretty familiar with me. I would probably say the differences would probably be language. They call things different names for it, but besides that, it’s really the same thing.”

### **On ‘what has to happen for the team for the team to come together’:**

“I think we all just have to honestly take it one day at a time and continue to work on the little things. I feel like in the game football, you can have a great team and all of these star players, but it’s really just about the details and the cohesion and finding ways to always never get complacent. I feel like it’s easy with this game. I feel like the game of football, in general, is just so humbling. The more you think you’ve got the answer, the question switches. That’s probably the biggest thing I would probably say.”

### **On ‘the complexity of the defense’:**

“I would say it’s complex. I would say it adapts. It adapts to whoever we play, and I think that’s what makes Coach Staley such a great coach, what makes his defense such a complex defense. He’s able to adapt to whoever we’re playing, at least with my time and past experience with him. We were able to play multiple things, we do multiple coverages and stuff like that. So, it’s pretty cool. I think we’re very adaptable, and it’s very cool to see.”

### **On QB Justin Herbert:**

“Sherbert? J-Herbo? He’s everything I’ve heard. Unreal talent, great arm, has a laser, put things on a dot, calm, cool and collected in the pocket, goes through all of his reads, stud. The guy is a stud. It’s crazy because he’s a lot bigger than I thought. I remember when I first met him, he came up to me and introduced himself. I was like, ‘Dang, this guy is kind of tall. This guy could be playing D-end if he wanted to if he put a few pounds on.’ He’s a stud. I’m happy to be on a team with him, that’s for sure.”

### **On not having to face Herbert:**

“I’m glad I don’t have to face him, for sure.”

### **On the offensive line:**

“[C] Corey Linsley, I believe, is the best center in the league. He’s the best center I’ve faced, by far. I remember in 2020 when we were the number one defense facing him at Green Bay. He’s by far the best center I’ve faced. Then you’ve got [G Matt] Feiler, eight-year vet, very good, stout. A lot more athletic than people think. I feel like for a guy that size, being able to move the way he does is really impressive. And then [T Rashawn] Slater, obviously, a great anchor, real athletic, can move, as well, strong. Then, obviously, with the rookie, [G] Zion [Johnson], I think he has a lot of tangibles that are really good, good lower half, strong hands, smart obviously because you see him out here running plays and I’ll see him — it doesn’t look like he messes up very often, so that’s what you want in an O-lineman. It’s a great group. I think it’s a great group. Like I said, Rome wasn’t built in a day. I just feel like we just have to take it one day at a time and continue to battle like we have been, real competitive, back and forth, and everything will fall where it needs to fall.”