

## Chargers Week 18 Media Availability

Thursday, January 4, 2024 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

### OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR KELLEN MOORE

#### **On the performance of QB Easton Stick and Stick 'being turnover-free over the last couple of games':**

"Yeah, I think he's done a nice job. Obviously, he's protecting the football. It's a crucial aspect of this thing. Really, in the Las Vegas game, the sack fumbles, ultimately, turned it over. But, I think he's done an excellent job. He makes really, really good decisions with the football and he's been playing on a good level."

#### **On WR Quentin Johnston 'matched up most of the game' with Broncos CB Patrick Surtain II:**

"Obviously, [Patrick] Surtain [II] is one of the premier guys in this league for a reason. I think it's awesome for Quentin [Johnston] to play those type of matchup games and get to learn and grow from them. He had a couple of good third downs where we were able to kind of handle some pressure and get the ball to him. Every experience is a growing experience, but that guy is one of the best in the league for a reason."

#### **On OL Jordan McFadden's performance last week:**

"I thought Jordan [McFadden] did an excellent job. He played really calm. He did a nice job. I thought it was definitely a thumbs up."

#### **On the 'importance' of starting a game for McFadden 'as a benchmark':**

"For a lot of players, you go through practices — and practice is, obviously, a very important aspect of our profession — but until you get into the real deal, just like Easton [Stick] is going through, and I think that Easton, just like Jordan [McFadden], has responded in a really positive way. When you get these opportunities, you take advantage of them, and more opportunities are going to come to these guys as they go on in their careers."

#### **On McFadden 'playing calm':**

"I think he's done an excellent job all season of being prepared, being ready. We have felt very comfortable if a situation like this were to arise. He played a little fullback for us, a little bit of jumbo tight end for us, just because we felt like he could handle those different roles, even as a rookie. He's been a guy that we've tried to sneak on the field in those different roles, just to give them chances because we felt very comfortable with him out there."

#### **On WR Keenan Allen's season:**

"For Keenan [Allen], I think, individually, he's obviously had a phenomenal season. I think, for me, it's awesome when you have an opportunity to work with a guy like that, who's played a lot of football and continues to play a lot of high-level football as his career has gone on. Certainly, this year was another example. He's the guy that can do a lot of different things. He's really smart, he has a great feel for the game. I've grown just being around him. I think a lot of our guys can learn from him, just watching them, and I think a lot of the younger receivers can continue to see what Keenan did throughout the season and kind of build off of that and learn from those guys. He's been a special one."

**On if anything 'impressed' him this season 'being around' Allen:**

"I think his feel is second-to-none in this league, just his ability to get open. When you give him a few options on a route, he can find the right the right way and the right decisions. Obviously, his ability to line up in all of the different places, especially as our season transpired, just that you're trying to use him in a lot of different ways. I think everyone kind of knew, at some point, that we were probably going to him a lot of times on third downs and different things like that, so for him to be able to do all of those different things speaks to his capacity and level of high-level football."

**On how this season compares to the coaching change he experienced in 2019 with the Cowboys:**

"When you end the season, maybe, sometimes, in unfortunate circumstances, you want to end it the right way. I think this last game is still important. You want a good taste at the end of it, just for everyone — for all the players, there are guys who are competing for future jobs and current jobs and all that, all the way down to the end. I think it's really important that we all buy into that aspect of it. I think it's really important leaving these players the right way and giving them, hopefully, something. Wherever this football journey takes everyone, you want to leave it in the right way that, hopefully, someone can build off of this season, build off of this for their career, and take advantage of future opportunities."

**On WR Alex Erickson's performance 'down the stretch':**

"Alex [Erickson] has done an excellent job. Coming in here after training camp, hopping in here, those type of guys — what's impressive to us is his ability to just process football and be able to handle all of the different roles. When you're a receiver towards the bottom of the depth chart, so to speak, from an active roster to a practice squad situation, any of those guys who have the ability to just hop in and solve problems, I think is really huge, and he's done that phenomenally — really starting in that Green Bay game, being able to hop in there and play in some situations where we may need you in this position, we may need you in this position, you kind of have to be ready to jump around, and he's able to handle that. That's earned him more opportunities as the season has progressed."

**On his 'main takeaway from this season':**

"I think it's an awesome opportunity, once we get through this one, just to just to process it. Every season has good, has things you want improve on, both individually, collectively as a group, lessons you can take. I think it's just a good example of just how small the margins are in this league. Our season may not have gone the way we all hoped for and expected, but it shows how small the margins are that we lost a number of games, certainly, that were really close and those little things all matter. We've been preaching that the last few weeks, just talking about how important the details are and the little things, all those things add up. Everyone gets to process this thing in a couple of days."

## **DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR DERRICK ANSLEY**

### **On preparing for Chiefs QB Blaine Gabbert:**

"We've watched the things that he's done at K.C. He played some in the preseason, some this year when [Chiefs QB] Patrick [Mahomes] was out of the game. A very different skillset. He's more of a pocket guy. He's big, strong. He has a really good arm. We have to do a really good job of keeping a roof on it. He has good touch on the deep ball. I don't know how much of the scramble element that he brings that Patrick brings, they're totally different in that aspect, so things are probably going to be more on time. We have to do a good job of staying tight in coverage."

### **On his takeaways from the game following film evaluations:**

"We left some things out there. Wish that we could have had a couple of those plays back. I wish that I could have a couple of those calls back, especially on third down. But, I thought that our guys played hard. I thought that we fought, strained. We gave ourselves a chance to win at the end, which is all that you really can ask for."

### **On 'experimenting' with different players at different positions:**

"We're still open to see who is going to play. Obviously, some of those young guys will get an opportunity in some aspect. [LB] Daiyan [Henley] has been doing a really good job on special teams all year. You saw [LB] Nick Niemann get an opportunity [last week] with [LB] Kenneth [Murray Jr.] being down, and he played well. Definitely would like to get him in there, for sure."

### **On 'how much' Henley 'would have played last Sunday' if he was 'at full health':**

"We wanted to get him in there early in the game when everything was kind of even to see how he responded to that kind of environment. Being a four core guy for the whole year, some of those fibers kind of catch up with you. But, if he was all healthy, we would have liked to see him in there probably 50-50."

### **On the performance of DL Scott Matlock:**

"Scotty [Matlock], he's a dog. He's an old school, throwback, fight you, scrapper. He knows exactly what to do. The guys in his room like him. The defensive guys respect him. We're very pleased having him and I think that he has a bright future."

### **On when he 'would have liked' Henley to contribute at linebacker:**

"Early in the game, when it's normal ball. Didn't want to get him in there late, wanted to get him in there early to get the flow of the game so that we didn't throw him in there in a bad situation. It just didn't work out where we didn't get him in there early. Early in the game, normal flow — they're not up, we're not up. Just let him go play."

### **On if S Derwin James Jr. 'returned to his normal play style' last week:**

"Yeah, I think that you saw some of that, right? [*Laughter*] He was flying around. It was good to see. He was just being Derwin [James Jr.], playing fast and playing physical. He ran the show at safety. We blitzed him a lot. He was involved in the run game and pass game. He had a couple of PBUs, saved a couple of big plays from happening. Very proud of his effort, but that's what we expect from him. He's a big-time player."

### **On 'if there is a correlation between how much is getting put on his plate and his production' with James Jr.:**

"You always want him to have a limited menu, but he's a unique player, so you can always do a lot of things with him. We focused on safety this past week. He did a really good job there. He played 70-something plays at safety and we're proud of how he played."

### **On if he has ever coach 'a player like' OLB Khalil Mack:**

"No, I've never coached a guy like Khalil [Mack]. I played with a [Pro Football] Hall of Famer in college, DeMarcus Ware, but coaching Khalil — it's easy coaching him. Today, we had a [PowerPoint] slide of him, congratulating him on the Pro Bowl. We watched the clip of him getting his 100th sacks, live on the TV copy. Everybody gave him a standing ovation. He didn't want any of that [*laughter*]. He doesn't want any spotlight, he just wants to keep the guys involved and finish this thing the right way."

**On the importance of Mack 'for leadership':**

"It's important to have a room full of guys like that. That's one of the unique things about our group, nobody is looking ahead, we're trying to be where our feet are at. We're going to finish this thing the right way."

**On 'how fitting' it was with Mack getting his sack 'by running over the offensive lineman':**

"I think it was right on time. He is a speed-to-power guy. He's an old school, throwback, put your hands on a man and move a man, and get him out of the way. That was good to see. We had pretty good coverage on the back end, where he got a chance to come around on a loop after the chip. It was one of those effort sacks — effort and ability. That's what you get, that kind of result."

**On 'the impact of this week for all players moving forward':**

"We've said that the whole year. You get one chance, on Sunday, to go out there and interview. We have to do a good job of putting them in positions to have success and let them go play fast and play free. Just go be who you are. We don't need to be any more or any less. Have a good time playing together, then we'll see what happens after the season."

**On DB Deane Leonard's playing time this upcoming week:**

"We'll see. He's been battling that heel. That's a tough injury for a DB because you're planting on one foot or the other. When you have that kind of torque on a plant, it can bother you. But, he's been out there all week and he's been looking really, really good — he looks fast, looks fresh, explosive. If he's feeling up to it, and the doctors give him the OK, we'll definitely play him on defense, we have no problem doing that."