



POSTGAME TRANSCRIPTS

Los Angeles Chargers vs. Kansas City Chiefs

Sunday, September 29, 2024 ⚡ SoFi Stadium ⚡ Inglewood, Calif.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH JIM HARBAUGH

On the way the team played:

“Respect. Respect for the Chiefs and respect for our team. Really proud of the way they fought, the way they kept playing. You could use a bunch of guys as an example. I mean [QB] Justin [Herbert] was doing everything humanly possible and then some. About the same for the other 47 guys that were dressed in this game. [OLB] [Khalil] Mack, [LB] Daiyan Henley, [LB] Denzel Perryman] DP, [RB] Gus [Edwards], [RB] JK [Dobbins], everybody. Nothing but respect for the way our guys played.”

On if the way the team lost is frustrating:

“It is. Losing is not something you ever want, I don’t like to lose. I’m not saying anything other than ‘I wish I could have done better for our guys and I have nothing but respect for the way our guys played.’ That’s how I truly feel, deeply feel. That’s exactly what I told the team a few minutes ago.”

On the team’s defensive effort:

“It was a great effort. Great performance. Our defense got us the two turnovers and the stops. They just played so good and played so hard and that’s all guys want to do, they just want to play – and usually when you play hard, it takes care of so many things. That’s what I thought our guys did today and just, respect.”

On what he could have done better:

“Me specifically? The pre-snap penalties, we’ve got to be better. I look at that as coaching and that’s something I can do better with, have to do better.”

On the pre-snap penalties:

“I look at penalties as under my responsibility.”

On Kansas City’s defensive adjustments:

“It was pretty consistent the entire game. I thought we had some really good counters. The screen game was outstanding. Like I said, [QB] Justin [Herbert] – we’ve got to get him just a little more time. Some of the throws he made, some of the plays he made were incredible. We’ve got to look at it as ‘How we respond from here?’ It’ll be like starting the season over again when we come back.”

On Kansas City finishing close games:

“They play hard. They play hard, they play dialed in. That’s tough to get stops, but we were getting them. We feel like we’re close. Like I said, nothing but respect for them and for our team and the way they played.”

On the challenge in the third quarter:

“That was – we just saw it on the replay board and was looking at it, thought the ball had touched the ground, saw the one hand come off and the ball touched the ground. Felt like it was a big enough play to challenge and get ourselves organized on defense. We were having some headset issues and I didn’t know if it was really being understood, that next call. So, I decided to regroup and take a chance on that being an incompleteness.”

On the timeout on the goal line:

“That one, I wish I would have challenged that one. I really do. I think I could be better there. I saw, I thought he got touched down before the line to gain. I thought replay assist would get that spot right and then my decision was to go for it or kick the field goal. I wanted to – I said ‘I could take a delay here and kick the field goal,’ because we were behind the clock in getting organized for that fourth down call, or take the timeout and go for it. So, I decided to take the timeout and go for it. Then, we started seeing some replays that maybe he did get a little closer, maybe it was possible that he got the first down. I wish I would have thought of just throwing the challenge flag. It would have been the same result as taking the timeout. I wish that would have come into my head.”

On the decision to go for it or try for a field goal:

“Yeah, what play we were going to run. We were getting organized for that and I just wanted to make sure that we had the time to think about it. I thought it was worth the timeout but in hindsight, if that thing was even close to actually being a first down and the replay assist didn’t get it right, then yes I wish I would have just challenged it in lieu of taking the timeout. So yeah, stuff I can do better at.”

On WR Josh Palmer’s slide:

“That was not designed to slide down, no. I think if the ball was where it was and I think he, I don’t know if he caught it clean, I think he tried to kind of go down to secure the catch is the way I saw it.”

On WR Ladd McConkey:

“It’s nothing but respect for the way he plays. He’s a stalwart out there, he’s one of those guys. He’s doing everything you could ask, including blocking. He’s just doing everything in his power.”

On the starting offensive line:

“We felt that was our best. [OL] Jamaree [Salyer] had a lot of time on task at left tackle in his career. [G/T] [Trey] Pipkins [III] felt more comfortable at right tackle, where he had been playing. [G] Zion [Johnson] and [C] [Bradley Bozeman] Boze left guard and center. The guys went through the week of practice and we felt [C] Sam [Mustipher] gave us the best opportunity at right guard.”

On the pass protection:

“We’ve just got to get [QB] Justin [Herbert] another half-second, second. We really do. He’s trying to get the ball out as fast as he possibly can and he is. Like I said, some of those throws that he made, I mean I don’t have the adjective for it but it’s warrior-like. It’s everything within his human power and then some is the way I look at it. It’s incredible, what he can do and we do need to get him just another second.”

On holding his breath when QB Justin Herbert got hit:

“Yes.”

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS QUARTERBACK JUSTIN HERBERT

On how his ankle felt during the game:

"I thought it held up well. I took a couple hits, but for the most part the integrity felt pretty good – glad to make it through that one."

On the offensive performance:

"You just have to execute on third down. You've got to score in the red zone and those penalties really hurt us. So it's an accumulation of those things. If we were able to prevent those or limit those from happening, that's what you saw in the first drive."

On one-score games:

"I think there have been plenty of games, whether they're wins or losses, where they've been close games. It's the NFL and so we're ready for that. We fell short today. There's plenty of times where we can turn on the tape and see us come away with one or go score. We have to stay patient, understand that we got the right guys out there. We didn't execute. It didn't go our way today and that's not going to stop us going forward next week, two weeks, whenever it is. That's just the way the NFL is."

On Kansas City's defense:

"It's tough. Like we said during the week, they do a good job of getting after the passer. We expected that. We knew that and I thought we were prepared for it. I've got to do a better job of getting the ball out, quicker, with answers. I thought the offensive line did a great job stepping up and blocking and doing everything they needed to do. It's definitely on us to be better at that."

On if he got frustrated at any point:

"I wouldn't consider that a highlight. Just the NFL, part of the game, emotion."

On remembering specifically when he was frustrated:

"I do not."

On offensive changes causing penalties:

"I feel like that would be the easy answer. We've repped it. We've worked it all week. I think it's just one of those things where we've got to stay patient, we've got to hold our water and understand that the cadence – we have to use that as a weapon. This front seven that we were going against, we felt like it was important to be able to hold them off. Whether it's switching up the cadence, different cadences. Unfortunately we, we had too many penalties with that."

On the cadence:

"I think it's just on us to lock in, to listen to the cadence and understand that we've repped these. We've practiced them. I can do a better job of communicating them, especially at the line of scrimmage. So I think it's on all of us."

On WR Ladd McConkey:

"I thought he stepped up big-time today. He made a bunch of big plays and he's one of those guys that we trust, especially if it's third down, first and second – you're looking to get him the ball. As soon as he catches it, something good is going to happen. The more times we can get him the ball, the better our opportunity."

On the first quarter performance versus the rest of the game:

"I think it's just on us. It's executing on third down or fourth down if we're going for it. It's converting in the red zone and making sure that we're pushing the ball – limiting those penalties like I talked about. If you could put that together that's the offense that we want to play."

On a play he'd like to run again:

"I would have to take a look at the film. I think everything happens so fast and you move on from play to play that you don't sit back and dwell. That's for tomorrow. That's when we watch the film tomorrow and look at it, be critical about it. It's on us to be able to convert third down. Any third down we didn't convert, fourth down, those are the plays that we'd love to have back".

On the Chiefs' defense:

"They're a really well-coached team. We've got a lot of respect for them. They've got a lot of guys on that side of the ball that fly around. So it's on us to be able to handle their front seven, push the ball downfield and keep running the ball."

On the Chiefs' defensive pressure:

"I think that's the important part where check downs and where your hot answers come in. If they are pressuring you, get in to the right protection, make sure that we're blocked up and if that's not possible, it's finding your easy outs. It's the guys that are out in the flat that they're not covering, that they're not immediately pressed on. I thought we had a good game plan, working with the quarterbacks, talking with those guys, especially the game plan. I felt comfortable going into it, but it's just something that we can always be better at."

On fourth down in the red zone:

"We unfortunately didn't convert."

On playing in today's game despite ankle injury:

"I look to those guys in that locker room. I know that everyone else in that locker room would do it as well. Everyone's not feeling great – it's the NFL. It's a tough and brutal game. I know that I left everything I had out there. I felt comfortable. Our communication with the training staff has been great all week. I know that all those guys in the locker room would do the same thing."

On wearing additional ankle protection during game:

"Yeah, I did. I wore a brace underneath it."

On if wearing an ankle brace helped:

"Yeah. I felt much more secure, stable. Obviously it was a little more bulky, but I thought we did a good job protecting it."

On the challenges on offense today:

"I think it starts on third down. Converting on third down and limiting those penalties especially."

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS HEAD COACH ANDY REID

Opening statement:

“Alright. I'd like to thank our fans for being here and supporting us. That was – they were tremendous, a lot of red in the stands. Jim Harbaugh doing a great job here. He was down a few guys, but what a game plan they had and a nice job coaching. With that, I'm proud of our guys for hanging in there. Easily could've gone in a different direction there, but our guys supported each other. I thought our defense stepped up in key situations. Whether it was [LB Drue] Tranquil coming back here and he ended up having ten tackle, led our team in tackles. [DT] Chris Jones had two – two big sacks and then a big fourth down play. The list goes on and I thought what all of the guys – I thought our secondary played tight and challenged. I thought linebackers were flying around, [LB Nick] Bolton just moving around and making plays all over the place. And then the D-line played a lot of different looks from [Defensive Coordinator Steve] Spags [Spagnuolo] and [Defensive Line Coach] Joe [Cullen] and execute like they did. Offensively, [TE Travis] Kelce had a Chief's career day for receptions, or broke the record for receptions. Anyways, you guys know what I'm saying. [WR Xavier] Worthy – it was great to get Worthy going. You got an idea of his talent, speed and ability against man coverage. [RB Kareem] Hunt stepped in, had 14 carries for 69 yards. A couple of throws [receptions] for 16 yards. He had a big day, I'm sure he'll be very sore tomorrow. Third down again, [Offensive Coordinator Matt] Nagy had a great plan. Set up all the way around offensively and just kept reinforcing these guys to hang in there. The things that we're doing offensively, there were self-inflicted wounds on ourselves between penalties and interceptions and so on. But anyway, third downs – we're nine-for-15. [TE] Noah [Gray] had four big plays for 40 yards and big catches. And then with playing Kareem more, just kind of went with a hot hand. Not down on [FB] Carson [Steele], he had the fumble – they'll figure that out. We're lucky to have three, three good guys in there. [RB Samaje] Perine had a touchdown, had some nice runs for us too. We're good, we're in good shape there at that position. And then last is, [WR] Rashee Rice will, Rashee will have his knee checked out tomorrow with an MRI and it's his knee. I think one, we'll have to wait and see but I'm sure it's not as good of news as we want. We will see how it goes. Anyways with that, I'm yours.”

On WR Rashee Rice's injury:

“The guys all hung together. I mean, I feel terrible for [WR] Rashee [Rice]. He's been having a fantastic year and we're hoping for the best on the report. But if he is out, then you know. But I thought, I thought [QB Patrick] Pat [Mahomes] stepped up and just said, 'Hey, we're going to roll.' [Offensive Coordinator Matt] Nagy [Nagy] was just constantly, like I was saying, going through there and just saying, 'Hey, just hang with it and let's go just do a good job.' Just being positive with that in the best way they could.”

On the team's resilience:

“Yeah, yeah. No listen, that's this group and they've been that way from training camp on. So it's – they all support each other and that's a positive thing.”

On RB Kareem Hunt:

“Well, he looked good. He did some good things. So, I would've expected him to do well because he's been a good player for a long time. I thought he did a nice job for us.”

On RB Kareem Hunt turning back the clock six years:

“Well you can say that. You and I need to turn back the clock about six years.”

On finding a way to win in LA:

“Not always, we've given up a couple games to the Chargers – but they are battles. You know, I think both teams enjoy the challenge of playing each other. I know the Chargers are lucky to have the people that they have right now so, they're in good hands.”

On TE Travis Kelce's performance:

“Yeah. They played quite a little bit of zone out there and [TE Travis] Kelce did a nice job of just getting in windows. then when they did play man, he was able to do a nice job there. There wasn't as much double team as maybe you've seen or settling on him as much as he's seen so, he did very good.”

On reaffirming TE Travis Kelce's play:

“Well I, I really don't care what anyone thinks. I watch what the defense does and how they respect him. I take it off of that and I watch [TE Travis] Trav [Kelce] every day. I get to see him and how he works – he never wants to come out and practice and the game he's all in all the time. So, I don't know, I don't worry about all that. “

On if TE Travis Kelce needed this game:

“You'll have to ask him [TE Travis Kelce]. He's been all in. He's been so positive. It doesn't go there.”

On the LA winning streak:

“Add up, that's alright. Listen, you think of every one as its own so – tough games.”

On the expectation for offense:

“Yeah well, we're making way too many mistakes. We're driving – get these drives rolling and then shoot ourselves in the foot and once you do that, the percentages go way down. We'll be having a successful drive and not scoring points, so we've got to take care of that instead of going backwards.”

On QB Patrick Mahomes:

“Yeah, keep firing. Keep going. I'm, again, I've been through enough games with him to know how he operates. He's all in. He didn't want to throw those interceptions but he'll also, he's willing to find a way to lessen that and so on, so he does a great job.”

On the pass to TE Travis Kelce and the go-ahead touchdown drive:

“Yeah, well that being the start of it and then everybody else contributed there. What we ended up doing was getting a nice mix of the run and pass together. We were getting positive yards on them, once you get that going – you're okay. I thought the O-line kind of just buckled down and they got the run game, they got the run game going.”

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS QUARTERBACK PATRICK MAHOMES

On WR Rashee Rice going down:

"Obviously the corner made a good play. I was trying to fire it to [TE Travis Kelce] Trav on his body. I overthrew him a little bit, turned the ball over and then I thought [WR] Rashee [Rice] really made a good play. I was trying to tackle the guy and obviously rolled up on him. If I just don't turn the ball over, that never happens. So, you've just got to try to get better at that."

On severity of WR Rashee Rice's injury:

"I didn't know exactly what happened because obviously, I was trying to make a tackle, but I know [WR] Rashee [Rice] and how tough he is. So him being down like that, I knew it wasn't good. All we do is pray that the X-rays and MRI's and stuff like that are better than what it looked, but I mean next man up until he's back."

On the team's resilience after injury:

"I think more than anything it's just trying to get everybody kind of settled back down, including myself. I think at the beginning of the game in general, we were trying to do too much and that's why we had the fumble and then the interception. But I thought guys stepped up and filled as good as they can, the role that [WR Rashee Rice] he has in our offense, which is a big one. All we can do now is kind of go back to the basics and try to get guys in opportunities to succeed. I thought [TE] Travis [Kelce] did a great job of stepping up and making plays like he always does, but at the end of the day we got the win and that's what's important."

On RB Kareem Hunt's performance:

"I thought he did a great job. To come into an offense, I know it's an offense he'd been in, but an offense he hadn't played in years and to be able to run the football hard, get well-earned yards and catch the ball out of the backfield, it was good to see. I'm just glad [GM Brett] Veach has built a great running back room that we can get guys to step up and make plays while [RB] Isaiah [Pacheco] is not here."

On if RB Kareem Hunt:

"He's always been a guy that runs tough. He's hard to tackle and you can see that. He's going to make sure he finishes every single run and falls forward. I think that was good to see and I think he'll get more and more comfortable as the year goes on and be a role in our offense."

On getting more RB Kareem Hunt than initially anticipated:

"Not necessarily. I thought he was going to have a role in the offense. I don't know what the exact stats are, but I know he ran the ball well and with our running back room and just kind of in general in this offense, if you got a guy going you just let him go. It's not about how the game plan is planned out, it's just if a guy's hot that day you keep feeding him the football and that's what we did today."

On another one-score game:

"It prepares you for the playoffs and in the playoffs, you're going to be in one-score games. I think the NFL is just very balanced and we are playing division games against great opponents. These are games that we have to find ways to get wins. I feel like we're not playing, I mean it's like a record playing, but I feel like we're not playing our best football but we're winning football games. That's a big credit to our defense. It's a big credit to the guys stepping up offensively and in second halves. I'm glad we're getting wins and we'll keep building and try to keep getting better."

On WR Xavier Worthy's performance today:

"I mean a big-time catch down the field, some big-time third down conversions. He's a great football player and I think he's just getting more and more comfortable within the offense. I think when I go back to the tape I feel like there's going to be a couple more that I thought about taking those chances and I think he ended up winning. As I build comfortability with him, I'll keep taking those chances and when he makes plays like that, like he did today, he'll give me that ability to shoot him and let him go out there and make one-on-one catches."

On TE Travis Kelce's increased involvement today:

"I think it's a mixture of everything. Obviously with [WR] Rashee Rice going out early, you've got to put [TE Travis] Kelce back in that situation where he is getting a high volume of catches. And then the Chargers were taking away some of the outside stuff, leaving the middle of the field open and we were able to get it to Trav in some of those zone coverages. But I mean the whole Kelce thing in general hasn't been a worry to me. I know whenever we need him he's going to make plays and that's what he did today."

On the touchdown pass to WR Xavier Worthy:

"I told him if the safety comes down, I'm throwing it pretty much as far as I can and letting him go catch it and that's what he did."

On his 100th regular season start:

"It's cool. I mean I know how hard it is in the NFL and we've been blessed to play in a lot of games, a lot of big games and win a couple of Super Bowls here. At the end of the day, you don't take it for granted. You are on a platform that you dreamed of as a little kid. I think I try to enjoy those moments and at 100 games in I'm going to enjoy this moment and then we're going to move on because that's how the NFL works."

On assessing the offense:

"I think it's a matter of cleaning it up. We scored 17 and we scored in the twenties these last few weeks, and I feel like it's just a play here and there. It's the interception I throw to [TE] Travis [Kelce], if I put on his body that gets the drive going. We have a fumble in the redzone on the first drive where we got some momentum going. In this league if you're scoring upper twenties to lower thirties, that's good football, that's good offense. We're close. [Head] Coach [Andy] Reid said it, we keep preaching it. I know some Chiefs fans are probably annoyed by it, but that's all you can do in this league is keep pushing and pushing to get better and I think it's going to pay off in the end."

On the receivers wearing the TE Travis Kelce shirt:

"Yeah, I didn't see it. I saw it on social media. It's a close-knit group and that whole room, the whole offense is very close. I mean we've been through adversity together, we've been on a lot of road trips, going to the Super Bowl, and a lot of these guys has been to at least one of the Super Bowls. You build this brotherhood and I think they had heard all of the outside noise and they know how much of a leader [TE] Travis [Kelce] is. It was cool to see them show their support, and him to go out there and be Travis because that's who he is."

On TE Travis Kelce's thoughts on the shirt:

"No. [TE] Travis [Kelce] just wants to win at the end of the day. That's what you take for granted in this league. We've had a great offense and we've done all of these cool things and it's been fun, but at the end of the day it's all about winning. I think he's the true leader when it comes to that. He doesn't care who gets the stats, he just wants to win the football game."

On being down 10-0 at the first quarter:

"I knew we had to pick up our urgency. We weren't playing good, but I think the best thing about it is, no one talks about it and they are starting to now, but our defense is a really good defense. They know how to shut the door and keep us in football games, and then they believe that the offense is going to find a way to score enough points in the end and that's what we did today. They had a quick 10 points and we put them in terrible positions, they held [the Chargers] to a field goal and then they shut the door to the rest of the game. That's what it takes to be a great football team is everybody stepping up. Our defense has done that this entire year and offensively we found a way to get enough points."