

Chargers Week 9 Media Availability

Wednesday, November 2, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On injury updates:

“[TE] Donald [Parham Jr.] and [WR] Josh [Palmer] are out of the [concussion] protocol and they will be out at practice today. [K] Dustin [Hopkins] will not be at practice, but he is trending well. His hamstring recovery is going well. [OLB] Chris Rumph [II], his knee is progressing well, that has been a bright spot. I think that he is getting a lot closer to returning. [WR] Mike Williams will be out with his ankle, but progressing well. [WR] Keenan Allen is still day-to-day with his hamstring. [OLB] Joey Bosa’s recovery, he’s back in the building and doing well. He looks healthy, fresh. Obviously, he’s going to be week-to-week. We’ll let you know when he’s closer to returning to practice, but he’s in good spirits, and the progress has been positive and we’re excited about that.”

On Hopkins’ recovery process:

“Week-to-week, but going well. Made good progress over the bye and, I think, getting closer to a return to practice.”

On yesterday’s trade deadline:

“I think you are aware of all of the activity in the league. We were certainly a part of it. Nothing materialized, but I thought that we were active, to an extent, and nothing really happened for us that was going to make sense for this season or next. That’s a lot; it’s not just this season, it’s the years to come. There were some moves made yesterday, for sure.”

On if there is a ‘target return date’ for Bosa:

“I think that six-to-ten weeks is just taking the people that have gone through that injury. I think his brother [49ers DL Nick Bosa], like I said, went through something similar. We’re going to let you know, but I think if you shot for the middle of that, that would be ideal, but we’ll let you know, I think, when he’s returning to practice. Once he returns to practice, then you can, I think, establish a timeline of what’s next. Until he’s out there at practice, I think we just have to err on the side of not saying anything, that way we don’t get our hopes up one way or the other.”

On Allen not ‘dressing’ for practice on Monday and if he ‘suffered a setback’ in the Week 7 game:

“No. He did his workout Monday morning. He did a rehab session, or whatever you want to call it, a training session, in the morning. We’re just being careful with him. Nothing happened in that game. There was no setback. It just hasn’t responded the way we had hoped, and that’s the truth. We’re just trying to get him back. It’s in a tricky area. We just want to make sure that when he goes out there, he has full confidence to play his game. That’s what we’re trying to establish, is to get him healthy.”

On 'if something happened' in the Week 7 game with Allen's hamstring:

"Nothing happened in the Seattle game. He hasn't gained that full trigger, that full Keenan Allen yet. It just hasn't happened. It's just in a tricky spot. This injury can do that, at times, and that's what it's doing. It just requires all of our patience — at the forefront, his patience. It's testing his patience, but we're going to make sure that he keeps progressing."

On if Allen will practice today:

"He will not be out at practice today."

On 'potential concern' that Allen may not play on Sunday:

"We're just going to take it day-to-day. I think anything is a possibility. We're going to make sure that we do everything we can to get him back strong and get him back feeling his fullest, where he's not out there having to figure things out, where he's had it already figured out in practice."

On if he will be 'confident' with the wide receiver group that is ultimately available on Sunday:

"We'll be confident with whoever goes out there that is dressed up. We have full confidence in our group. We know all of the guys on our team. We're going to have to put a good gameplan [together] with the guys who are out there."

On if Allen would be on a 'pitch count' if he plays on Sunday:

"I don't know that. I'm not ready to make any statements that way. Our goal is to get him feeling like himself again and we're not there yet."

On his 'message to the fan base' following the trade deadline:

"It's a good point. We made a lot of moves in the offseason. We made a lot of moves. We made aggressive moves. I felt like we made a lot of smart moves that I think are paying for us right now, in terms of establishing the type of depth that you need, based on what's happened to us and many others around the league. The trade deadline is something that is overblown in the league. Number one, not that many trades happen. There is a lot of hype towards it, but then there are not as many as people think. What you have to do is you have to make moves that make sense for this year, but then, it's not just this year, it's future years, too. We feel like we have a lot of guys coming back, the guys that you guys know about; Mike [Williams], Joey [Bosa]. Those guys are coming back for us — Keenan [Allen], they are coming back for us. These guys aren't out for the season where, 'Hey, that would really put us in a tough spot.' Where, like, 'They're not coming back, so, hey, we need to replace them.' That was our mindset. We were in discussions, like the rest of the league. It just didn't make sense for us at the time. We feel confident in the guys that we're going to get back and that we have a lot of time to create the identity for the rest of the season."

On the Eagles acquiring DE Robert Quinn via trade and if the Chargers 'looked into that deal':

"I just think draft capital, and then the implications financially, are the reasons why we did or didn't do that. That's one thing that, I think, is a strength of our team, is that we have all of our assets. We have draft picks in every round next year. We have a very healthy cap situation and we want to make sure we keep it that way because when you keep it that way, you can have the type of offseason that we had last year, where you can make moves that can really help your future. We want to make sure that we have both of those things as healthy as we possibly can, while making sure that we're in the mix, competing with the rest of the league. I feel like we have done that. I like where our football team is at. I know that this second half of the season, we get a bunch of games here to bring it all together."

On 'if the valuation of draft capital in the NFL makes trades different than other leagues':

"The way our league is set up is different than a lot of other sports. Also, onboarding a player into your team, it's a lot easier when you are playing a team that only has five guys on the floor at one time. It's a lot easier in basketball because there are not as many variables. When you play a sport like football, it's not one-to-one. I make a baseball trade, that guys is playing the same position and he's batting in the same batter's box and it doesn't matter. There isn't the same transition that a football player goes through. They are different sports, so you can't compare the two. That's just my position on that topic. Every team that is in the league is trying to make their team as good as it can be, and we're no exception to that."

On 'how good of a sense he has of the team' through seven games:

"A strong sense of how good we can be because I've seen it. I've seen us play. What we've experienced is a lot of the tougher side of things, through seven games. I've seen us at full strength. I've seen us have to absorb some tough stuff and be able to overcome it to go on a three-game winning streak. I think you know where you need to go. I think, with this team that we have right now, we're excited to get back out there on the practice field after a bye week. We're excited to get back on the practice field and improve because I think we do know a lot more about our team and how we have to do things because we've experienced a lot of the disruption that some teams haven't gone through so far. We've experienced all of that, so we have a lot of contingencies. We've had to operate already in a lot of other spaces that some people haven't. I think that has been healthy for us, to get our nose bloody, to have to go play some tough, rugged games, to have some attrition and to have to be able to figure it out. I think that's healthy for the rest of the season because you have already had to make a lot of those adjustments."

On what he accomplished over the bye week:

"Just a lot of assessment in all phases of the program. I think offense, defense, kicking game, the way you practice, the way you meet, the way you travel, preparing for the next game, getting a jump start on the next game. I feel like I was able to communicate to a lot of different groups. That's important when you get that sort of time to try and connect with your people; coach, player, staff. Then, get some rest and be with my family. We had a really good practice on Monday. That's where our focus was, to have a really good practice on Monday. Now, we get an opportunity today. I'm looking forward to getting out there with the guys."

On his assessment of the offense:

"I think that we have, in talking with you guys before the break, is that it's been inconsistent, but that we have shown that we can play really high-level football. It's just tying that all together and bringing it all together. I think we've shown a lot of resilience in having to figure things out. We've learned some tough lessons, but I think our guys are at a point where they have a lot of confidence in each other's ability to face the tough part of the NFL. We've faced a tough loss, faced some injuries, and have been able to come out on the other side of it. I think that's really healthy. I know that, just speaking from comparison to last season, we didn't experience nearly as much at this juncture. I think after the bye week, we experienced a ton of it. I think, already this season, we've experienced a lot that is going to help us down the stretch. I think our guys now have that sense of who we are. I think when you get a chance to reset, you also know that when you come back, what needs to be done, and, more importantly, how it needs to be done. That's where our focus is."

On 'teaching consistency':

"It's the approach in everything. It's not just a game. A lot of people look at the game, it's just the approach during the week that matters the most to create a consistently winning culture, consistently winning organization. It's every day. I think, looking back on what I told the guys is, 'You don't know it or not, but we have a really good thing here, fellas. Because if we didn't, we wouldn't be 4-3. We wouldn't. We would be a lot worse if we didn't have a good culture. We would be worse, based on what's happened because you can look at the league and you can see.' Although we haven't performed to our capacity yet, that's an exciting thing because we know what is in front of us and we know what we have had to absorb and now we know where we need to go and how to get there. That's important that you have that perspective. Like I said, to create the consistency, it starts with how you do things every single day. That's where our focus is going to be."

On the Falcons' offense:

"They're doing a really good job. They run the ball at a really high level, and then they throw the ball down the field. They get a lot of explosions both ways. Time of possession, they really possess the ball. I think that, in terms of the matchup, they have guys with over 50 carries. They spread the ball around in the run game. Their quarterback [Falcons QB Marcus Mariota] is a factor running it on loose plays. Marcus is playing fantastic this season. They have a lot of big play weapons. They drafted a receiver in the first round, [Falcons WR] Drake London, who is a nice player. [Falcons TE] Kyle Pitts is as good of a prospect that's come out in the last several years, since I have been in the NFL. He's a quality player. They have just done a good job bringing that group together, just playing tough and rugged. The O-line has come together. There are a lot of young players on there that have really emerged. They have played in a lot of close games, so they are battle tested. There is a reason why they are first in their division. They are number one in their division because they've put together a really good season on offense."

On Falcons RB Cordarrelle Patterson and their history together at Hutchinson [Kan.] Community College:
“Rare size and speed. Rare acceleration. Rare contact player. He’s 230 [pounds]. People look at him and they don’t realize how big he is. He runs fast through the smoke, fearless through the smoke. I saw it as an 18-year-old kid at Hutchinson Community College. He was the same way then that he is now. Any one that has ever been around him knows how special he is. I’m just glad that he had enough time in the NFL for everybody to see that he is more than just a kick returner, because he is a good example of when you stay with it, you join up with the right people that have the right vision for you, what can happen. I’m really proud of him. Knowing his sister, Crystal, his mom, how important they are to him, how far he has come, I’m really proud of him. He’s had an amazing career. He’ll play a long time. He’s has some rare engineering. Hopefully, he’s not at the game this week [laughter].”

On if he is ‘surprised’ that Patterson ‘was able to make the transition from college to the NFL’:
“No. No surprise. Cordarrelle [Patterson] can do anything on a football field.”

On if RBs Isaiah Spiller and Larry Rountree III will compete this week for the third running back role:
“Yes.”

On if Spiller ‘has taken the steps forward that they had hoped for’:
“There is not enough evidence one way or the other. He got a carry in the football game and he did enough to be active for that game. But to prove himself as an NFL back, there is still a ways to go. He’s practicing well. Hopefully, he can continue to earn more opportunities where he can show what he can do.”

On if he is ‘concerned’ about RB Austin Ekeler’s usage through seven games:
“No, not at all. He’s an NFL running back. We’re trying to use him the best way we can. He’s really come alive. After the start [of the season], where he didn’t score the ball, he’s really scored the ball. He’s been a real factor in the passing game and in the run game. He’s as solid as ever. He’s doing a great job of leading our team. We’re going to need him to have a great second half of the season. He’s the type of guy that he’s going to get better as the season goes on. He’s not a guy that wears down because he brings it to the facility every day. He’s one of those guys that I was talking about how you build a culture with. You have to do it with people like him.”

On the ‘mental aspect of the bye week’:
“The NFL is a really challenging season. Just to face 17 regular-season weeks, the three preseason games, a training camp, it’s a long way. The fact that you can re-energize, you have to have that in order to gain perspective, know where you need to go. It’s the physical rest, but from a mindset standpoint, you know that as tough as the first stretch of the season is, the rest of it is a lot tougher because there is more at stake in the second part of the season. Your mind has to be sharp. I think the bye week does a good job of resetting it. That’s why I like having the bye closer to the middle [of the season], or past it, so that you can kind of gain that second wind.”

On if Palmer and Parham Jr. ‘will both be available’ for Sunday’s game:
“No, I’m not willing to say that. They’re both going to be in practice, and then we’ll make the determination moving forward. They’re both going to be at practice, full [participation].”