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WEEK 13 — PODIUM AVAILABILITY

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LOS ANGELES CHARGERS DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR GUS BRADLEY

Opening statement:

“It’s been a good week. I think the bye week gives you a chance to just reflect on some things. Obviously, you look back and self-scout things that you’re doing well and things that you need work on. We kind of shared that with some of the players. As a coaching staff, I know I met with [Head Coach] Anthony [Lynn] and talked about it as well. We got some good work trying to tighten up those areas that we need work on as well. We had that bonus day and kind of emphasized those things. It’s a good week. It’s a big challenge for us. [They’re] a good team. [Broncos RB] Phillip Lindsay, we have a lot respect for him. He’s a guy that — you can stop him, stop him, stop him and by that I mean he gets a couple yards, then all the sudden he gets a 50-yard run. He has that ability. We know that. We didn’t do a very good job against the run the first time. I think they had 190 yards rushing. We have to do a much better job versus the run. The passing game, I think with some of the trades that they’ve made, [Broncos WR] Courtland Sutton is a guy that you really see. He’s really developing. I think he’s, in our eyes and we look at him — I don’t know how well-known he is across the league, but he’s going to be and he should be because he’s playing that well for them right now. He’s extremely talented. The tight ends are extremely talented. It’s a very good challenge for us.”

On Broncos RB Phillip Lindsay:

“He’s a guy that can start-and-stop and change direction. When he breaks through the line, he runs like he knows he’s fast. Especially for our eraser, [S] Rayshawn [Jenkins], coming up to tackle him. [For Lindsay], it’s not about making him miss, it’s, ‘No, I’m going to outrun you.’ I think the angle of our free safety and some of these things is going to be very important. Just getting a lot of guys to the ball. Obviously, with a guy like that, setting edges is very important.”

On S Rayshawn Jenkins:

“We’re really excited about him. I think that we had a vision of how he was going to come along at that spot. He has done a really good job as an eraser tackler, a guy just doing his job. He did a good job against Kansas City on a couple of pass plays that we saw, the one interception that he had. You just see a guy that’s getting a better feel for what we’re asking out of that position. I think what I’ve noticed in that position is the longer you play there, you really have to fight boredom. You’re just playing deep middle a lot of times and you’re like, ‘Okay. I do the same thing. Here’s my landmark,’ but you have to have a mentality — more like a Cobra-mentality. Like, ‘I have to be ready every play,’ and that’s difficult, but for him just learning the position, he’s still in that stage where you don’t have to battle that part of it.”

On if he showed Jenkins clips of free safeties he has previously coached:

“Yeah, we have. We do that, especially when I first got here. We continue it. We’ll go around the league and look at teams, and what makes them successful with the middle and third safety. We do more than that, too, we ask him to do more. That’s primarily what teams are looking at it as. There are so many teams playing a lot single high, that it’s good to take clips from around the league and show him different angles, how teams are playing it. You just try to give him a bank of knowledge to draw from.”

On the moment he knew Jenkins’ potential at free safety:

“The pick that he made against Kansas City was a pretty good one. It was almost like he knew where he needed to be. He wasn’t quite on his landmark, but he was trying to lure the eyes a little bit and play with him a little bit. That’s the mark of a guy that’s pretty wise at playing that spot. That was pretty good. I think, in the playoff games, too. When he came in at the end of the year last year, we saw some plays that he made that gave us the idea that he has the chance to be that safety back there.”



On DE Joey Bosa:

“He’s in a spot right now — I was just talking to him again yesterday — he feels really good where he is. I can remember when I first got here in my first meeting with Joey, he was like, ‘I know I have my work to do in my pass rushes and the run game. I have work there [to do], but I really want to grow in the mental part.’ That was the conversation we had. I said, ‘That’s good, you’ll get a chance to do that. We’ll talk through some things, but I think it’s just more that you play.’ I’ve seen him grow in that part, just the way he talks, the way he is with his teammates, the way he goes about his business. I think he’s always been a true pro there, but I think that part of it, too. Look at the scoreboard, we might be down or we might be up, but that same mentality. It wasn’t like it was bad before, but I’ve really seen him mature in that part of it, too.”

On if Bosa has become more vocal:

“It’s a different kind of vocal. He’ll pull guys aside and in one-on-one to talk to them. He’s not a guy that will get up in front of the whole defense and give that type of speech or that type of demeanor. He definitely will talk to guys. It’s really unique because [DE] Melvin [Ingram III] are really kind of two different personalities. Joey said, ‘You do not understand how much Melvin has helped me.’ Just that statement itself showed pretty good humility. He was a guy that talented and he appreciates what Melvin has done, and I know Melvin would say the same thing.”

On LB Thomas Davis Sr.:

“It’s been a challenge for him. I go back to it, just learning a whole new system and some of the things. He’s more of a downhill linebacker. It was the old-school days and it was lead-weak. That’s the style that he plays in and he’s really good at it. Now, he’s had to incorporate some of the pass game things that we’ve asked him to do. I’m sure to the person that’s watching it — even [Head] Coach [Anthony] Lynn when we were first doing it was scratching his head, saying, ‘How come he’s doing this when it’s this?’ I said, ‘It just happens everywhere we’ve been. Linebackers, when learning the system, that’s kind of the phase one of understanding it.’ I would say in the last three or four weeks — it really showed up in the Green Bay game, I thought, where he really made great strides. I think since that point, he’s really getting into a rhythm now and playing well. That’s the whole idea, is to play fast. To recognize run [or] pass, when to take your shot or when not to — but he made some plays last week, too, just with the backs on some of the screens that have been issues for us in the past. He has done a good job there. I didn’t know that about the tackles, where he was. I know every week when we talk that he’s up there. He’s a guy that we need on the field because he gets around the ball so much.”

On positions that would have high tackle numbers:

“[Linebacker] should have a lot. That, strong safety. Those positions, you’re going to have a chance to be around the ball quite a bit.”

On Davis learning the defense:

“Some of the things that we ask him to do, it’s like a Cover-2 MIKE linebacker. Once you get into the feel of it, even though you have to drop to play the middle third as a Cover-2 MIKE — if it’s a run play, you want him to play aggressively. If it’s a pass, you want him to play deep. Sometimes when you play that Cover-2 scheme, a MIKE might be dropping and it’s a run and he might be coming up when it’s a pass. You’re like, ‘Okay, we just have to keep working to this.’ Eventually, you get a feel to where it all clicks where when it’s pass, you’re dropping, when it’s a run, you’re attacking. It’s no different in our scheme. It’s very similar. You just have to fight through that and go through that. I think that’s what Coach Lynn, when he was asking me about that.”

On forcing turnovers:

“Each week when we talk about it we show clips. One thing that we’ve done differently this year, is we go back to the game the following week. Like, on Wednesday, we went back to the Kansas City game and talked about the attempts going after the ball and missed opportunities. We talked about going after the ball every week, but we didn’t go back and evaluate every game and show it to the players, just specifically that part. How I always key it is I look at it and [ask] are we going for the ball? Are there attempts to try and get strips? Are there attempts to try to do it? If there are no attempts or the attempts are low, then we have an issue. If there are a lot of attempts and it’s just not happening, then it’s my mindset to just keep going, they’ll come in bunches. It just happens that way. I think it’s more of an evaluation like that. [LB Jatavis] JB [Brown] had the strip. Rayshawn [Jenkins] had the pick. There were two, but there were self-inflicted wounds that kept us from getting them. I’d agree with you overall. We would like to see more opportunities to get the ball out. I think that’s a way that we can help our whole team.”



On self-scouting:

“Red zone and third down, those were big areas I think when we looked at the self-scout. We have to a better job. We’re better than we were in the beginning of the year. I remember last year, boy in the beginning of the year, the number of explosive plays was almost out of control. We had chances to evaluate. The second part of the season, it really came down. We’ve seen that some with third down where we’ve played better. It’s the consistency. Our issue is we’re getting into these third-and-two, third-and-three, third-and-four a lot. Once we get up to third-and-seven, third-and-eight, and the guys have a chance to rush and get there, we’re pretty effective. It’s that middle area. We have to do better there and we have to do better on second down to keep them out of those situations.”

On S Adrian Phillips and S Derwin James Jr.:

“They’re excited. They want the opportunity to play. I bet if you asked them if they were able to go, they’d say, ‘Oh yeah. We’re doing everything we can.’ What’s been told to me is let’s evaluate them day-by-day and see where they are. How they’re moving, how they’re going about it. We really kind of had to come up with two plans — plan A and plan B. What they’ve shown out there, their movement and the limited reps that they’ve both gotten, I think they’re progressing right along. It’s one of those things where that might be an evaluation all the way through the week before we’re told or it comes to me and say, ‘Okay, we’re ready to roll.’ When you talk to them, they both feel pretty good about where they are currently.”

“I was concerned about [the weather]. I thought, ‘Shoot, if we’re in the gym the next three days, is that going to affect our evaluation of them?’ Yesterday, we had a chance to go out there, which was big. Today and tomorrow, hopefully we can get on a field and see it. There are always chances for setbacks with guys. You have your fingers crossed that they keep progressing. Then, it really is just going to come down to saying, ‘Okay we feel good about it and they feel good about it.’”

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR SHANE STEICHEN**On the bye week as the offensive coordinator:**

“Yeah, it was a lot of self-scout, just looking at what we’re doing. It’s just been on the three games that we’ve had, but it was good just to see tendencies that have been showing up and trying to go from there, so it was good.”

“I don’t want to say them, but obviously everyone has tendencies and then you’ve got to try and break them as you move forward.”

On tendencies through the entire season or since being offensive coordinator:

“They’re just more since I’ve started calling it. I just want to see what we’re doing, run, pass, down-and-distance, stuff like that.”

On RB Austin Ekeler:

“I saw something that he’s on a rapid pace for some type of reception record, so I feel like he is getting the ball a good amount. He is a heck of a player and he’s a playmaker with the ball in his hands. It is always good to get him the ball.”

On using both RB Melvin Gordon III and Ekeler:

“Those guys are a one-two punch. Melvin’s a great runner and he’s good out of the backfield and Austin’s a great runner and pass-catcher. I mean, they are explosive players. Anytime you can get your playmaker’s the ball, it’s good.”

On Gordon getting up to speed:

“I think so. I think he’s running well. He’s running hard, he’s seeing it good and, obviously, the line, the tight ends and the receivers are blocking well for him. He’s doing good.”

On T Trent Scott and T Trey Pipkins III:

“I think Trent’s done a heck of a job and then, obviously, Trey, he played the last two games. I think the more those guys play and continue to play, they’re going to get better and better with reps. They’ve done a nice job.”

On WR Mike Williams:

“I think you take what the defense gives you. Obviously, you want to get guys and everyone the ball. If there’s an opportunity for him to get touchdowns, we’re definitely going to throw him the ball in the red zone, if we get the opportunity.”



On QB Philip Rivers:

"We as coaches have to talk to him and do that stuff. He's a veteran player in this league and he knows what he's got to do to get better. Obviously, there's a fine line there. You still want to be aggressive throwing the football, but at the same time, make smarter decisions. As a play caller, sometimes you've got to make better calls."

On altering play calls:

"You want to have a high completion percentage, but I'm not going to alter how we call that offense, how we call plays. We're going to still do what we do and just try to make smarter decisions."

On adjusting the foundation of the offense:

"Obviously, you look and see where you can add the wrinkles. You don't have a whole month, but you've got a couple weeks — you've got just the one week actually, to look at it. You can add your wrinkles and put a little stuff on it."

"I think for each opponent, it changes your game plan. You're not going to run certain things or certain personnel when they play a different type of style of defense, so I think it's all dictated off who you are playing."

On Pipkins:

"I think it's just more repetitions more than anything. A rookie playing tackle in this league, I don't care who you are, a first-round pick, whatever it is, it's tough. It's tough in this league to play, but like I said, he's a smart guy, he works at it. He's tough, he battles every day in practice, and I think the more reps he gets, he's going to continue to get better."

"He's got quick feet, good hands so he has that ability."

