



***Kansas City Chiefs vs. Los Angeles Chargers
Sunday, December 8, 2024
Week 14
Chiefs Chairman & CEO Clark Hunt Quotes***



OPENING STATEMENT: “I want to start off by congratulating (Head Coach) Andy (Reid), the coaching staff, the players (and) our entire leadership team on a hard-fought win tonight and clinching another AFC West Division Title. It’s a tremendous accomplishment. My hat goes off to Andy and the players for sticking with it. Obviously, tonight was another very close game. It seems like every time we play the Chargers the games are like this and we’ve certainly overall have had a bunch like that this year. I’ll go ahead and open it up (to questions).”

Q: What’s it like from your perspective to have it come down to the final play?

HUNT: “Well, I’m certainly glad that we’ve ended up on the winning side of those games. As we’ve been going through it, I’ve thought a lot about last year where we had a lot of close games and they tended to go the other way, particularly in November and December. We really had a challenging stretch. So, it’s a credit to the level of competition in the National Football League. All these guys are professionals, they’re very talented and you know our guys have hung in there and found ways to get the ‘W’ at the end of the game.”

Q: When you won the first of these AFC West titles do you remember what that meant to the franchise and to you, then what does it do for the franchise now to keep winning these titles?

HUNT: “Well, you certainly never take them for granted. I do think in a lot of ways when you do something for the first time it’s more special and that was not the first time we’d ever won the division, but when we started this streak of nine you know I think we were all really excited. We didn’t know what was ahead of us. It’s been a very special time period of the Kansas City Chiefs, an amazing era of Chiefs football and the credit for that goes to (Head Coach) Andy (Reid), (General Manager) Brett (Veach) and their staffs. They’ve just done a phenomenal job, and I ought to mention the injuries this year. We’ve certainly had a lot of injuries, particularly at the receiver position and Brett and his team have done a fantastic job every week (of) finding a solution, finding somebody who can come in and help us.”

Q: On the organization being all-in on winning three Super Bowl Championship titles in a row.

HUNT: “Obviously, it is a big goal for us. Winning the Super Bowl is the goal every year. If we do it this year, we’d do something no NFL team has ever done, which is really special. We try to balance that with the long-term perspective. Our goal is to consistently compete for championships, and you’ve got to be thoughtful in your roster management when you’re trying to do that, but (Chiefs General Manager) Brett (Veach) and his guys do a tremendous job with that. He’s found guys that work within our limited salary cap resources, and they’ve been able to come in and contribute – (OL) D.J. Humphries is an example of that tonight.”

Q: On Clark's direction to Brett (Veach) and Andy (Reid) on balancing winning three-straight Super Bowls but also not jeopardizing future years.

HUNT: "It has really been no different than it has been since I've been here. We've tried to be thoughtful about making sure we're giving ourselves the best chance to win this year, but also putting ourselves in a position where we can win next year and the year after that. As I think about it, head coaches are very much focused on the year at hand and really, they are focused on the week at hand. A really good general manager will be thinking about not only this year, but about the next couple of years, and I think it is part of my role to help the organization think long-term. But certainly, we have an opportunity to do something, as I've said, that's never been done, and we are definitely all-in on it."

Q: What has been your direction in that regard?

HUNT: "Well, we want to put the best team we can on the field every year, and it's just a balance. It's a balancing act, right. You've got the salary cap and you've got to work with that, it has limitations, to some degree you can pull some of the salary cap forward if you need to, to help in a particular situation like we've had this year, we've done that a little bit."

Q: I think I just saw you meeting D.J. Humphries for the first time as you were walking through the locker room – you've met a lot of people this year – have there been more injuries this year than you've ever had as an owner?

HUNT: "Well, I'm sure it feels like that, but statistically, probably not. I'm sure we could go back and find a year where we've had more injuries, but it feels like we've had a lot of very important injuries. That was actually not the first time I've met D.J. (Humphries), we had a chance to say a quick 'hello' in the hall a week ago, but I hadn't had a chance to visit with him, see how his family is doing and see if he's found a place to live, so it was good to be able to do that."

Q: On if Clark stayed up to watch the SMU game.

HUNT: "Well, I did one better than that, I actually attended the game. It was an amazing game. It was an amazing comeback. It didn't go SMU's way last night, but today they got the good news that they made the playoffs, which is an incredible achievement in their first year in a power conference."



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Chiefs Head Coach Andy Reid Quotes***



OPENING STATEMENT: “Alright, what a great, great win to come out of this evening with. Appreciate our fans and the light show and everything else that they put on, it was phenomenal and they all hung here to the end which is great support for our guys. As far as the game goes, defensively we really, I thought played well the first half and held a really good offense, quarterback, to minimal yards. (Tershawn) Wharton with the two sacks I thought was big. Chamarri (Conner), eight tackles. The second half they kind of got it going but when it counted we took care of business there. Offensively, Pat (Mahomes) was 24 (completions) for 37 (attempts). (Isiah) Pacheco 14 (carries) for 55 (yards), I mean good numbers for him, it’s great to get him back in there and going. He and Kareem (Hunt) are a nice tag team to have and then, (Samaje) Perine also had a huge play for us. Xavier (Worthy) was five (receptions) for 41 (yards) which was good there. Eight guys caught passes today so that was a plus for us (and) third downs again were very good. (Offensive Coordinator Matt) Nags and (Defensive Coordinator Steve) Spags both put together I thought solid game plans that really helped us through. (Travis) Kelce with – I want to make sure I say this right – the fastest tight end to reach 12,000 yards, I mean that’s pretty impressive and the game has been around a couple years so pretty impressive to do that. Justin Reid on special teams stepping up and kicking off for us. Not a lot of safeties in the league are doing that right now, I thought he did a nice job. (Matt) Araiza came up big on the punt game and then Matt Wright – listen I mean he never looks at himself as the third guy. I told him just keep it right, a little to the right, Wright, just a little bit more but my hat goes off to him for the field goals that he made and tough situations plus that one right – that one at the end was great. Anyways, with that, time’s yours.”

Q: After the two-minute warning how much consideration did you put towards trying to go for the touchdown rather than positioning for the field goal?

REID: “I mean I have trust in Matthew (Wright) so I was good with where we were. Percentages are pretty high; I know we’ve won a game in that same situation on the opposite end so I get it but he’s a solid kicker. I wasn’t too worried about it once we got down in there. Now to get down in there was a nice job by our guys. That play that Pat (Mahomes) and (Travis) Kelce made right there at the end was something – that’s not quite the way it was drawn up.”

Q: Can you take us through what that play was?

REID: “It was a naked – with a back and a slide and they zoned it off. Pat (Mahomes) had it in his hands which is important and on the move which is important. He does some good things with that and then we had some people coming to him. Listen, I thought the Chargers did a nice job with that but they zoned us off, that’s more of a man though. They had been playing man up to that point, they had been zero blitzing us so if they would have done that, that would have been a great call.”

Q: Can you take us through your thought process of seeing plays unfold?

REID: “I mean, I have trust in Pat (Mahomes) making those kinds of plays. He kind of said that before the play, just – ‘I’ll make something happen,’ so, he has the option to run, an option to throw to the back and then everyone is coming to him on that. I thought he did a good job.”

Q: What are your thoughts on winning the AFC West?

REID: “Yeah listen. I am proud of the guys, I mean the coaches (and) when (Chairman & CEO) Clark (Hunt) gives us the opportunity to do this, or (President) Mark Donovan and (General Manager) Brett Veach. I mean we are all in this together trying to make this – and it's not easy, it's not an easy thing. Every year is a little different on how we've gotten there. I'm proud of our guys for just hanging in there (because) we've had so many tight games more so than some of these other years. The guys keep hanging in there and feeling like good things are going to happen and keep battling.”

Q: How important is this achievement?

REID: “Listen Adam (Teicher) I mean it's early in the year here, so we still have games left. When I say this, we're not just putting the tent up right here and calling it a day. We've got to keep playing and playing aggressively. Like I said, ‘We are playing some real good football teams that are trying to get themselves into the playoffs.’ So, they're going to be hungry and attacking. We've got to make sure we keep doing – but to answer your question it's a great achievement, it's a great achievement, but there's more left.”

Q: What does it say about Wanya Morris coming in and playing after a hard week or two?

REID: “I'm proud of him (Wanya Morris) for number one not hanging his head (and) practicing hard and then coming out when your one injury away from having to step in and go. Then he did a nice job and stayed up on all of his stuff – the mental part of it, he had stayed up on it and was sharp once he got in there.”

Q: What did you think about how D.J. Humphries played?

REID: “I think Initially it was fast for him (D.J. Humphries) then he settled down and I thought the second half he was playing well. He just – which I figured would happen. I mean he hasn't done anything with that kind of speed out there and then the physical part. These guys, they tried to drive you right back into the quarterback with their bull rushes and they are very good at it. So, he did a nice job.”

Q: Are you going to get used to these heart-stopping wins?

REID: “Not as I'm living.”



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Chiefs QB Patrick Mahomes Quotes



Q: On the last third down play.

MAHOMES: “Yeah, we expected some man (coverage), but we had plans for if it was zone (coverage). They (the Chargers) did a good job of covering it and then Trav (Travis Kelce) just played ball and got himself open. I wanted to give him the edge where I could either fall down and let the clock keep running or try to make a play with the easy type (of) throw and we were able to find a way to get that throw to Trav there and get the first down.”

Q: Is that where you expected Travis Kelce to be on that play?

MAHOMES: “He’s (Travis Kelce) supposed to run a corner route, so it is what it is.”

Q: At what point did you decide to throw it to Travis Kelce instead of rush for the first down?

MAHOMES: “I was – I looked at – I went through my reads. How Trav (Travis Kelce) released, it looked like a corner (route) and then the halfback and then a couple other guys. Then, as I went to (get) ready to run, I just saw eight-seven just sitting right there in the middle of the field, open, so I just fired it to him.”

Q: What was the discussion like on the sideline leading up to that play?

MAHOMES: “Yeah, we went through different scenarios, but the coaches have trust in me that I’m going to make a play happen and try to – if (it’s) not there, then I can fall down, and we can kick the field goal from a little bit further. We knew that they (the Chargers) were going to sell out to block the run. They did a good job on the outsides and the perimeter of kind of passing stuff off in zone (coverage). Just had to make a play and if it’s not there, you fall down and then you kick the field goal from a little bit deeper.”

Q: What does it feel like week-to-week to have something peculiar happen that leads to a win?

MAHOMES: “Even though I feel like we could have played better, I mean that’s a good football team (the Chargers) (and) a good defense. We were able to have a good last drive there to get us in field goal range. As long as we have a chance to go out there and have the football and make a play happen, I feel like we’re going to make it happen – giving Matthew (Wright) the chance to kick the field goal and he knocked it through.”

Q: Were you wanting a touchdown or were you content with taking a knee and kicking it at the end there?

MAHOMES: “I was content to take a knee. We could have maybe got it a little bit closer but when you’re in that range, you’re expected to make the field goal. We trust in our kickers. We trust in our special teams and that’s a huge part of what we do every single day, and we were able to make it and get the win.”

Q: On the consistency of the offense.

MAHOMES: “I think just – we have to be able to hit some of these explosive plays. I think that’s probably the biggest thing. Once you do that, it opens up everything else. It seems like we stall out on drives (and) on little things, and I’ve said that kind of all year long, but it is close. I believe – I truly believe we are close, closer than we were last year at this point. It’s just about finding a way to prove it on the football field on Sundays – Well, we play every day of the week it seems like (in) the next few days, but on game days. Then, we can kind of go into the playoffs with some momentum.”

Q: On being sacked multiple times.

MAHOMES: “I mean, it’s a part of football, you just play the game. We’ve played a lot of good defenses this year. That’s the one bad thing about when you win the Super Bowl, you play the best schedule, and we’ve played a lot of good defensive ends and defensive linemen. I think for myself, it’s just finding the soft spot in the pocket. I feel like on some of the early third downs I was kind of running into where they were looping to (and) they had a plan for me escaping the pocket. So, just trying to find that soft spot, I thought I did better at that as the game went on and then I was able to make the run at the end. Working the new guy (D.J. Humphries) in (and) trusting in those other guys. I think we’re going to be hitting the ground running as the playoffs come ahead.”

Q: What kind of achievement is it to win another AFC West Championship when all these games are going to the wire?

MAHOMES: “It’s our first goal every single year, to win the AFC West. It’s a great division, where (it’s) a lot of rivalries where everybody’s playing each other tough and three teams are probably going to make the playoffs. That speaks to the division that we play in and so to be able to win this division (and) to gain another game in the playoff picture – it was an important game for us against a really good football team. We found a way to get a win but now we have to keep building if we want to get to our ultimate goal.”

Q: What did you think about D.J. Humphries’ performance today?

MAHOMES: “I thought he (D.J. Humphries) did a good job. I mean, there’s little things here and there. He’s still learning the playbook, so he knows how to pass protect, that’s the easy part – he knows how to run block. To pass off game to new guys to know where he can kind of cheat and kind of get subtle cues on my cadences and stuff like that. He truly is just out there playing football and just one-on-one reps. He did a good job today. I mean, obviously, I’ll go back and look at the film and hopefully we can get him back out there soon but to battle (and) to play all those snaps right off of an ACL injury, I was proud of how he fought.”

Q: Can you talk about Travis Kelce being the fastest tight end to 12,000 yards and what he means to you?

MAHOMES: “He (Travis Kelce) means the world to me, man. I mean, without getting emotional – he’s a guy who has really kind of made me who I am in my career and (he’s a) true leader on the football field. Someone – everybody says ‘security blanket’ but someone that I can go to at any moment and he’s going to make a big play happen. As he’s gone throughout his career, he’s never dropped off as far as his work ethic and the way he leads and I think that’s super important when you have a guy that’s going to have a gold jacket and he’s the hardest working dude on the team.”

Q: What do you think has made you who you are?

MAHOMES: “I think just both. Just in terms as a player, obviously, he’s (Travis Kelce) someone that – he plays in the same wavelength that I do and it’s hard to do that and I think you see (that) it takes guys time because it seems like from the first day I’ve kind of been on that same page with Trav. Then, seeing him work every day, everybody sees like the personality on the TV and stuff like that, but you don’t see that everyday work ethic that he has. I mean, he’s the guy that gets mad when they take him out of practice reps. That’s just the type of work ethic (that) he has. Even for me, to come into the league and have a superstar player and see him work like that, it kind of showed me that I’m going to have to put that work ethic in if I want to get to that level.”



***Kansas City Chiefs vs. Los Angeles Chargers
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Chiefs Hall of Fame Inductee Tamba Hali Quotes***



Q: What did it feel like when you looked up and saw your name in the Chiefs Ring of Honor?

HALI: “I’m still taking it in. It’s one of those experiences – it’s hard for me. It’s really hard for me to – you know, looking up there to see my name I think about my dad (Henry Hali), I think about my (Former Teaneck High School) head coach (Dennis Heck) from high school – nothing about me. It’s more about the people who have surrounded me to be in the position that I am in, so it’s really not about me, it’s about those people.”

Q: Was this ever your goal when you played?

HALI: “No. First, I didn’t think I could run. I didn’t think I was fast or strong. I just had a heart to play the game, I loved the game (and) I put a lot of effort and time in it, but no, it was never my goal to be a Chiefs Hall of Famer or even a Hall of Famer (or) any of those things. It’s more about winning games. For it to be today, you know it’s special.”

Q: What was it like to share this moment with a lot of your former teammates?

HALI: “Yeah, to have DJ (Derrick Johnson), to have Justin (Houston) – Justin was the guy – DJ, Jamaal (Charles), Ron Parker, Albert Wilson, Thomas Gafford – to just have all of those guys around, it brings back memories because we did put in some time while we were (together) and to celebrate it with them, it means a lot.”



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Chargers Head Coach Jim Harbaugh Quotes



Q: Do you have any update on QB Justin Herbert?

HARBAUGH: “A contusion. Leg contusion. Tough as they come. Warrior.”

Q: What was your message to the team after the game?

HARBAUGH: “Reminded them of Sir Andrew Barton. ‘Fight on my men,’ Sir Andrew said. ‘I am a little wounded but not slain. I lay down and bleed a while and will rise and fight again.’”

Q: Is this particularly frustrating how this played out in the end?

HARBAUGH: “No, it was a really good team. Nothing but respect for the Chiefs, the way they play, their physicality, their confidence and their belief in the system and each other. We were trying to better that in all four of those areas. We came up two points short of that.”

Q: How did you feel about your defense being able to contain them most of the game?

HARBAUGH: “It was a battle. It was a football fight on both sides. I think the defense played really well. Once again, in the red zone, getting pressure, stops and getting three-and-outs. I thought they played well.”

Q: What were you anticipating from the Chiefs on that third-and-seven? Were you surprised by the throw?

HARBAUGH: “No, I thought that was likely. We predicted a couple of those early. It was not a surprise or shock.”

Q: What did you like about the receivers without Ladd McConkey tonight?

HARBAUGH: “Quentin Johnston - just tough as nails game. I mean catching the ball in traffic, contested catches and getting open and taking a big hit to the head and kept the football. Down after down, he ran good with the ball. The guys came to play. Quentin Johnston came to play. Joshua Palmer, DJ Chark, really the whole football team. It was a football fight for four quarters.”

Q: Is the offense where you want it to be at this point in the season?

HARBAUGH: “We are just battling, doing our best, and getting better. We sure don’t quite. I love that about our team.”

Q: Do any of the offensive struggles worry you, like the first and second half differences?

HARBAUGH: “Second half was outstanding. We basically flipped the script in our offense. We had a great second half. There were some penalties where we got behind the sticks a few too many times that stopped

drives. We just keep working and getting better. What more can a coach ask? The guys are giving it their very best and they are working to get better every day. It is in place, so that is all I can ask our guys to do.”

Q: What are the biggest lessons you can take away from the two games against Kansas city?

HARBAUGH: “I don’t know that I have the biggest one or biggest two lessons. I have respect for the Chiefs, for (Chiefs Head Coach) Andy Reid. I think he is the best. We will keep working and, like I said earlier, this one hurts. We will lay down and bleed for a little while, but we will rise and fight again.”

Q: What were you trying to do on the last kickoff before Kansas City’s last drive?

HARBAUGH: “He just hit it a little bit high, a rare mistake. We were trying to kick it to the goal line.”

Q: How did you feel Stone Smartt played?

HARBAUGH: “I felt he played really good. He came up with some tough plays. I am really happy for Stone. He had a couple of contested catches on big downs for conversions. There are some real good things to build on there for Stone.”

Q: Did you adjust anything significantly from the first half to the second half?

HARBAUGH: “We made some adjustments. I think the biggest difference was staying ahead of the sticks and being efficient with the run, passes, conversions and eliminated the penalties. The offensive penalties were dogging us down in the first half.”

Q: How did you feel about your rush plan and how it was able to contain Patrick Mahomes?

HARBAUGH: “I thought it was good. There was some good pressure there. We had some stops, some sacks, some hurries. The pressures were good. He got out a couple of times. It’s the best you can do, to try to contain him.”



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Chargers QB Justin Herbert Quotes



Q: How would you assess the wide receivers' performance tonight without Ladd McConkey?

HERBERT: "I thought those guys stepped up big time. They made big plays when we needed them. We just didn't make enough plays tonight."

Q: What happened on that play in the first half when you got banged up?

HERBERT: "Took a shot to the knee, but I should be okay."

Q: Head Coach Jim Harbaugh mentioned that it was a leg contusion. Is that accurate?

HERBERT: "Yeah, I'd have to watch the film to see if it was a helmet or an elbow. I'm not quite sure. Just took a shot there but felt good enough to go back in."

Q: What did you feel like was the difference offensively from the first half to the second half?

HERBERT: "We didn't make enough plays in the first half. We didn't execute the way we wanted to in the pass and run game. We weren't moving the ball well. That's on us. I praise the guys for staying in there and staying patient in the second half. We just need to make more plays at the end of the game."

Q: What adjustments did you guys make from the first half to the second half?

HERBERT: "I wouldn't say we made any adjustments. We just went out there and executed the game plan. We settled in and stayed patient. We had the right guys out there, we just had to settle in and execute it. I think that's what we did in the second half."

Q: What do you have to say about the fight from your team tonight in a tough environment?

HERBERT: "It's always a tough game. For those guys to stick in there and battle. It didn't go our way at the end, but I have a lot of appreciation for those guys staying and fighting, doing everything that they can."

Q: For Quentin Johnston to stay in there after taking a shot and his performance tonight, what does that mean to you?

HERBERT: "He's a true professional. He's going to show up. It was a tough game for him, but he made some plays today. It was good to see. As long as he is involved in the offense, I feel like we can move the ball pretty well."

Q: What do you guys take away from two close games against the defending champs?

HERBERT: “Just to keep competing. We didn’t make enough plays today. That’s on us as an offense to take a look at, watch the film and be critical about ourselves especially in the first half. Take a look at what went wrong, where we can improve and what we can do to be better.”

Q: On losing to an AFC West opponent.

HERBERT: “It’s football. That’s the name of the game. We have to do everything that we can.”