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Chargers Week 6 Media Availability

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OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR JOE LOMBARDI

On coaching WRs Keenan Allen and Mike Williams:

"It's been fun. They're great players, good guys, smart players — just the total package. It's been a pleasure."

On Ravens CB Marlon Humphrey:

"He's a guy with great ball skills, whether it's creating fumbles or interceptions. He's a dangerous player. He's someone that you're always aware of where he is on the field. He's someone that you have to be very careful about when you want to go at him."

On TE Donald Parham Jr.:

"I'm really proud of him. He's a guy that when I got here and looked at him, I thought that he would be a receiving tight end, a guy that you activate in the red zone. As practices went on, his blocking kept coming on. Now, he does a lot of the dirty work for us. He's really a weapon in the passing game. There are a lot of things that [TE] Jared [Cook] does that Donald could do if Jared weren't here. He draws a lot of the dirty work blocking defensive ends, and he does a great job. Not really what I was expecting when I got here, but he's really developed into a complete player. He's young. I think that you're just going to see this ascension from that guy that is going to be fun to watch. It's amazing how well he runs after the catch, for as tall as he is. I'm very excited about him and his future."

On what surprised him about Parham's ability to run after the catch:

"You look at him and you're like, 'Man, I know that we're going to be able to throw the ball to him and that he's going to be able to catch it.' He has a great radius. But, when he gets the ball into his hands, he's nifty. You don't expect someone who is 6-foot-8 to have those kinds of skills. It's pretty unique and fun. Good traits."

On G/T Michael Schofield III:

"He's a veteran. As those guys get reps under their belt in NFL games, they learn how to play. There's a lot of comfort in that. He knows his strengths. He knows his weaknesses. He knows how to gameplan himself around those. I'm really, really happy with how he played on Sunday. I'm glad that we have him."

On who decides when to go for it on fourth down:

"[Head Coach Brandon Staley] just tells me. He says, 'We're going for it.' I say, 'Alright.' Then, I look down on my sheet and find my favorite play for the situation and call it. During the flow of the game, you're not really getting too excited about it. You're focused. Afterward, you're like, 'Man, I should have been pretty nervous there.' It's just playing the play and going off of his decision."

On if any of Staley's decisions to go for it on fourth down have 'caught him off guard':

"Maybe the Kansas City fourth-and-nine. We jumped offsides on fourth-and-four. When he said, 'We're going for it,' I was a little surprised there. After that, no, I don't think that I'll be surprised anymore."

On when a game becomes ‘shootout’:

“I think it’s always stressful a little bit. When you get up by two scores, there’s stress involved — you’re trying to burn some clock. When you’re down by two scores, there’s stress in coming back. There’s always stress involved. There’s less stress when you know that your guys are playing well, when you feel that they’re in a rhythm, when the quarterback’s finding the right throws and guys are getting open. You can sometimes feel that momentum — whether it’s real or not, you believe in it. It makes it a little bit less stressful because you feel like, ‘Man, we’re going to score if we get the ball.’ To say that I relish it, we always relish winning football games, however it happens. When you’re rolling like that, it’s fun.”

On if Allen or QB Justin Herbert ‘could have done anything better’ on the third-down scramble completion:

“No. The route that we called, they had it locked down pretty good. They did a good job defensively. He got flushed and the scramble drill came into effect. Keenan did the right thing. Justin found him. A lot of this game is more players than plays, and that was a great example of it.”

On T Rashawn Slater advising RB Austin Ekeler ‘not to chip’ in pass protection on his side:

“There are a couple of things there. Technically speaking, there are times where the tackle knows that he’s getting help, like, ‘Hey, we’re putting a tight end there, or a running back, and he’s going to chip for you.’ You know that it’s coming, so you can have a set plan to plan for that. I’m sure that he still loves those. Sometimes, though, the back has protection, then if you’re free, chip on the way out. As a tackle, you don’t necessarily know that that’s coming. He’s setting, thinking that he’s on his own, and then, all of a sudden, the guy gets hit and he’s like, ‘I didn’t know that was about to happen.’ I think that was really more of, ‘Man, I have a plan to block this guy. I’m good enough to block him. Don’t ruin anything because I’ve got it.’ But, if we put Jared [Cook] right next to him and say, ‘Hey, we’re going to chip this end, and then he’s going to release on a route,’ I’m sure that he’s still happy with that. It does how maturity because he understands what he’s dealing with and how he has a plan to block people. He doesn’t want that plan ruined if he doesn’t know that you’re coming there to chip.”

On if he ‘imagined that MVP talk was going to come this quickly’ for Herbert:

“I don’t know. It’s early. There’s a lot of football left to be played. We’re just in the first couple of chapters of this book. Obviously, we’re happy with the way that he’s playing, but we talk all of the time about not getting caught up into that stuff. It’s the next play, the next game — just win the day. All of that stuff will take care of itself. The more that you can tune out that noise, the better. Am I surprised at how well he’s playing? No. We watched last year’s film when we got here, and it was impressive how well he played last year. No, I can’t say that I’m surprised that he’s playing as well as he is.”

On his biggest takeaway from being an offensive coordinator:

“I don’t know. Something that [Saints Head Coach] Sean Payton says all of the time — that I think he probably got from [Hall of Fame Head Coach Bill] Parcells — is that compatibility is sometimes more important than capability. Brandon [Staley] set that up here for us offensively, where it’s just everyone being on the same page and rowing the boat in the same direction. I think that’s huge in any situation.”

On if Slater’s ‘maturation thus far’ has changed how he devises gameplans:

“It’s a great asset to any offense when you know that one of your edges, for the most part, is going to win his matchups. He’s had a murderer’s row of defensive ends that he’s had to block and he’s done well. It gives you confidence that he can do it. You can tilt some of your protection plans, at times, maybe towards the other direction. [T] Storm [Norton] has been doing a good job, too. I don’t want to minimize that. If you can only help one tackle, and one guy is solid consistently, then you’ll tilt your protection plan the other direction. It’s tough when both are needing help.”

On if the offensive success is a byproduct of gameplans or handling in-game situations:

“I think a little bit of both. We spend the whole week deciding how we’re going to attack this specific team with our specific players. Sometimes, it goes according to the script, and other times, they’re playing differently, or maybe some of the assumptions that you made aren’t true and you have to make those adjustments. It’s a little bit of both, a little bit of the flow of the game, but most of that work gets done during the course of the week.”

On Staley's leadership capabilities:

"He's always been a leader. He does a great job. I think that you can feel it — the spirit and the energy that he fosters here. Like you said, the guys do believe in him. They believe in the program. It's a good group of guys. I really like the direction that he's bringing this team."

On Staley's devotion to relationship-building:

"That's one of his core principles. It's a relationship-building program here. It's not just football, although that's important. Creating that family atmosphere, that atmosphere of trust, is huge at any level. I think that he's done a great job of that."

On what has impressed him most about Staley's leadership:

"You can tell that he cares. His honesty, his integrity, I think that the players can see that. They know that he has their best interests at heart. As a head coach for the first time, and as a young guy, his instincts are fantastic. He knows the right things to say at the right time. He has such a broad knowledge of football — offensively, defensively and on special teams — that he's able to speak the language to both sides of the ball, and really paint a picture of how we need to win every game. That expertise that he has, his communication style and his integrity, I think it's a good combination."

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR RENALDO HILL**On the run defense:**

"It's definitely a concern. Obviously, we don't want to be sitting where we're sitting. It's going to be continuous work each week for everyone to improve, starting with the coaches. Making sure we ride that ship in the run game. We always put emphasis on each week and will continue to do so. But we want results, and we'll keep working for those results."

On Raven's QB Lamar Jackson:

"You've seen the growth over his career, but he's throwing it with the best of them. That's what he is, a quarterback. He's talented, we know he can make plays out of the pocket. He's sitting in the pocket and he's letting it go. He's finding his targets, he knows where they are, and if he's in trouble he's finding those guys he relies on. We have our hands full. You like the growth; you hope to get that as a coach when you have a young player that'll continue to grow. And he's done that, he's taken a step each year. He's playing lights out."

On Raven's Defensive Coordinator Don Martindale's defense:

"Being part of that scheme in the past is that he utilizes everyone in the scheme. From the guy you think is just a special teams player, everyone has a role in it. He makes sure that if you're part of the team, he's going to maximize everything you have. Put you on the field and give guys a role. Guys want to step up to the plate, and that's what you're seeing and that's what you've seen from his defense in the past. When those guys get on the field, they're saying, 'Give me a shot, I'm going to go out there and give it my all.' You can see how those guys go out there and play for each other and play for a win."

On tackling:

"Each week we're going to out there and focus on all those aspects of the run game. Tackling, getting off blocks, separating. Just the simple things of making sure everyone's in the right place and getting the call. We have to do better, we'll do better. But it is a point of emphasis that we have to correct."

On the linebacking corps:

"[Linebackers Coach Michael] Wilhoite did an excellent job with these guys. From the training camp on, those guys got a ton of reps. When we talked about it in spring of trying to maximize those walk-throughs and making sure everybody got reps, those guys got a ton of reps. And it's showing for those guys throughout this progression from training camp to the season, that those guys are ready to roll. That's what we want to continue to do. We always talk about making the rooms competitive, we have two good linebackers that are waiting. It's a chance for those guys to get activated, and we know they're going to go do a good job if they're in there."

On CB Asante Samuel Jr.:

“Everything’s fine. You just have a young player who’s fiery. Sometimes you just need to calm him down. You don’t want it going that way, but he’s been built for this since day one. It was nothing that overly expressed itself in the game, it was just settling him down. We got another guy in there and we’re competitive. The next guy goes out there and plays hard and well for us. We don’t feel like it’s a big deal, he’s ready to go.”

On Samuel’s missed tackle on Browns’ WR Donovan Peoples-Jones:

“He was going for the interception. I wanted him to be aggressive. He’s in that position again, he’ll just learn from it. But I want him to go out there and make plays. If he’s ever in that position again, go get the ball. We’ve got all our tips and things we need to secure the tackle if we can’t get it but be aggressive; go get it.”

On how going against Browns QB Baker Mayfield last week helps prepare the defense for Jackson:

“It’s different every week. These quarterbacks all have different traits, and we all have to scrape it from the bottom and start building this thing back up when we have a new guy in here. There’s going to be certain things that carry over, but this is a different guy. We have to prepare for him just as we’ve prepared for every quarterback leading up to this game.”

On defending Jackson:

“You have to have everybody for this guy. We’re happy we do have [S] Derwin James [Jr.], but you’re going to need everyone to stop this guy. He’s elusive; he buys time in the pocket and then strikes down the field. We’re going to need everybody to have an eyeball on him and do a good job with our rush lines.”

On the Ravens’ receiving corps:

“They’re going to have alignments where they really express themselves. But we know if he’s [Ravens QB Lamar Jackson] in trouble, he’s going to find those guys. We just have to make sure we stay connected to them and make sure we identify those guys. We know if it’s a scramble pattern, we just have to make sure we pay attention to those scramble patterns. Make sure we don’t let those guys leak out. We know they’re his main targets, he’s looking for them, and we just have to know where they’re at all times.”

On his takeaways from the Ravens game last Monday night:

“There were a lot of things going on, but we’re just preparing our guys the best to go out there and play at a high level and get the job done. [Jackson] is a talented guy, one of the best in the business. I can just hear it in the background because I’m looking at it through our lens, and I’m trying to find those tidbits to help our guys. But you can’t ignore but what you’re hearing, the glimpses you do see. We’re just trying to put together the best game plan for those guys so they can go out there and have a chance.”

On Ravens WR Marquise ‘Hollywood’ Brown:

“You can compare him to other guys, but you might be missing out on that one little piece that this guy brings to the table. We just want to look at all those guys differently. We’ve talked about identifying locations, is there anything different with [Chiefs WR] Tyreek’s [Hill] locations that might be different than what Hollywood Brown’s location is. Maybe there’s some details there that we pick up. That’s what I mean by scraping the thing clean, so we don’t look at them the same.”

On the tape on Ravens WR Rashod Bateman:

“We go back to Minnesota tape and try to see what we can see from him. He’s a talented receiver, even going back to his combine film. Seeing how he gets in and out of breaks — all that stuff is available, and we try to take advantage of it because we haven’t had much on him. We have to go back and have our guys prepared so when they are lined up in front of him that they know what kind of receiver they have in front of them.”

On the depth in the linebacker group:

“All those guys in that linebacker position — we thought we had three good guys coming into the fold, and we knew we had some young guys behind it — all those guys are deserving of the reps they’re getting. We’re just trying to say, ‘Hey, it’s a competitive room. If guys are rolling, let’s keep it rolling.’ It helps our team, and we know that if anything happens to anybody in that group, we can have the next man step up and be ready to roll. Take those higher percentage of reps if needed.”

On LB Kyzir White:

“The biggest thing is not making the same mistakes. He’s big at self-correcting, but also, taking our coaching and saying, ‘Hey, this is what I need to do to get better.’ He’s doing those things and not making those same mistakes. He’s improving his game just by the things he saw in the past and not letting them happen again.”

On WRs Keenan Allen and Mike Williams:

“A lot of teams you play against, you might have that one premium guy to role to coverage to or move the coverage to. It’s tough with these guys, each one of them has their own problems they present. It’s kind of like picking your poison; that’s what it comes down to. And then you have a quarterback that can make all the throws, regardless of where the guys line up to get it there fast. It’s a good problem we have, and we hope it just makes it tough on everyone else. But it’s hard to pick your poison with those two guys.”

TIGHT END DONALD PARHAM JR.**On his role in the offense:**

“I fit pretty well. I really can’t complain about the trust they have in me to be in the run game, also in the pass game. With the tight end role specifically, we have a very big role in this offense. It’s really heartwarming to have that trust in our room.”

On improvements with his blocking:

“My main focus over the offseason was lower-body strength, and making sure my footwork is right. Making sure that was part of my game that really showed itself on Sundays.”

On improvements with his footwork:

“We work with the offensive line every day and we’re always going extra things with them after practice. We’re always working. [Run Game Coordinator/Offensive Line Coach] Frank [Smith] actually coached [TE] Jared [Cook] back in the day, so he’s always reaching out a helping hand for us. It’s a good thing.”

On the pace of the game:

“I feel like it’s slowed down a whole lot for me. Last year was a lot of catching up to the speed of the game, mentally. That was the biggest thing for me — a goal of mine to make sure everything’s complete; my game’s complete and I’m playing to the speed of the game.”

On QB Justin Herbert:

“He’s made big strides. It’s insane to see what he’s able to do every day. To practice with him, you see he’s working hard to put his best foot forward every day. It’s amazing to be a part of.”

On TE Jared Cook:

“He’s the father figure, in a sense. He brings a certain wisdom from playing for different teams and playing for so long. It’s a great thing for him to be in the room with us, he’s always giving us tips for how to beat this guy; how to do this, how to do that. It’s really important for him to be here for us.”

On his touchdown against the Browns:

“It was a play we worked on. It worked out even better than how we had worked on it during the week. It was really special to see those guys go out and put a lot of effort into blocking. It was a good thing to see.”

On his red zone presence:

“I feel as though it’s more so a trust thing between our OC [Offensive Coordinator Joe Lombardi] and myself, in particular. He’s definitely drawn up some things for me and it’s like, ‘OK, you have that trust for me.’ That’s my biggest thing coming into this year with new coaches. That was an important thing for me.”

On Brooklyn Nets PF Kevin Durant tweeting at him after his touchdown against the Raiders:

“That was a big surprise for me because he didn’t ‘at’ me, but everyone was sending it to me at once. It was a great moment in my life, and hopefully I can keep making more of those.”

On practicing Durant's dance as his touchdown celebration:

"Every day of that week, I was practicing — in the bathroom, in the shower, everywhere. Just practicing it to make sure that I had it right."

On the Ravens defense:

"They have a lot of different pressure schemes that we're working on identifying, pre-snap, post-snap. We just have to make sure we have everything protected so that [QB] Justin [Herbert] can do what he does."

On adjusting to Lombardi's scheme:

"It was a seamless adjustment, not too crazy. He came in with his play style of completions. It's not that bad, pretty simple."