



QUOTES

• 714-540-7100 • CHARGERS.COM • [@CHARGERS](https://twitter.com/CHARGERS)

JOSH.RUPPRECHT@CHARGERS.NFL.COM | SKIP.POWERS@CHARGERS.NFL.COM | JENNIFER.ROJAS@CHARGERS.NFL.COM | JAMAAL.LAFRANCE@CHARGERS.NFL.COM
BROCK.ANDERSON@CHARGERS.NFL.COM | LAUREN.MEYER@CHARGERS.NFL.COM

Wednesday, October 10, 2018 | Hoag Performance Center | Costa Mesa, Calif.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH ANTHONY LYNN

Opening Statement:

"First thing I just want to pay respects to the Spanos family. We lost the owner yesterday and even though I never got a chance to meet him, I heard a lot about him. I worked with his son and worked with his grandkids — I got to know him through them. That was a big loss for the organization. He's done a lot as far as in the communities of San Diego and Los Angeles alone. He just gave a lot, and I just really respect him and his family for all they've done. So many people, we've gotten so many letters. He affected so many people's lives, that I just wanted to pay respects to the family that way."

On the Cleveland Browns:

"Cleveland is a good football team. A very good, young football team. We knew they were good last year when we played them. We struggled to get points on the board against that defense. It's going to be a dogfight, but they all are, so it's nothing that we hadn't seen before."

On the offense under Browns Offensive Coordinator Todd Haley:

"Todd's very good at getting the ball into the hands of his play-makers, and he has a lot of play-makers. You know, [Browns WR Jarvis] Landry is having one of his better seasons. The running backs are playing very well — [it's a] three-headed monster back there at running back. The quarterback is really extending plays, keeping drives alive and moving the ball with his legs — and he's making every single throw in the book. Todd's got a lot of weapons to play with, so that's dangerous."

On if the Cleveland offense is similar to Haley's in Pittsburgh:

"I wouldn't say similar to what he did in Pittsburgh because he had a better quarterback. I think he's now playing more to [Browns QB] Baker's [Mayfield] strength."

On Browns QB Baker Mayfield:

"I wouldn't say he's ahead [of other rookie quarterbacks]. I just like the way they're using him. They're doing a lot of what he did in college. I think when first quarterbacks come into this league, we're going to have to give a little bit that way if they're going to have any success."

On how this Browns team is different from previous seasons:

"They were talented last year when we played them. That was a scary game for us. Like I said, they just learned how to win, actually. They've won some close games. They're [2-2-1], they could be 4-1 right now. It's a dangerous football team."

On both teams having played Oakland recently:

"Yeah, but some people are game plan specific. So what they did against the Raiders, we may see something completely different. They scored a lot of points in the game, so I expect them to do some of that. They have a huge play book with RPOs and all those type of plays, so we're preparing for everything right now."

On Browns Defensive Coordinator Gregg Williams:

"He has a huge play book. You never know what defense you're going to get from Greg. It's like a rolodex, and they're very good in their executing. He's got some weapons to work with, [LB] Jamie Collins [Jr.], I thought at one time he was one of the better linebackers in the game in New England. So he's still there. He's still a young player. [They have S Jabrill] Peppers in the back. I liked him coming out of school. [DL Myles] Garrett, you know, he has six sacks already. So he's got a lot of tools. Lot of line movement up front, trying to get pressure from the be quarterback that way. They're playing well."

On watching tape of Mayfield from Oklahoma:

"We studied Baker a lot last year coming out of school, so we were very familiar with what his college tape looked like. We didn't have to look at it too much this week, but we see them implementing some things that he did well, which is smart."

On playing against Haley:

"I've been standing on the other side for a long time now. So, we're very good friends, but we love beating each other."

On QB Philip Rivers:

"He's taking care of the football. He's going to throw one every now and then, but for the most part, he's taking care of the football. His completion percentage is up, and, you know, that's everybody. That's the O-line protecting and that's the receivers running the right routes — right depth, catching the ball. That's the whole team — backs out of the back field, but he's taking care of the football, and he's delivering the mail where it needs to go."

On if T Russell Okung or T Joe Barksdale will practice this week:

"Both will be limited in practice this week, yes."

On if Rivers' completion percentage is a product of being with him for a second season:

"Well, that can't hurt, you know, being around a guy for a year and two offseasons, but I think we're all in the same page. I think we've always been on the same page. I think in the beginning it may have been a little pull there with what we want to do, but right now I think things are rolling smoothly. The offense could not be more balanced right now in how we're attacking defenses."

On the offense adjusting to Rivers' skills this season:

"I think it's always been adjusted to Philip's skill set. That's what you have to do when you have a quarterback of this caliber."

On LB Kyzir White:

"He probably won't be available this week."

On if DE Joey Bosa will travel with the team:

"No, we've met about that. He will stay here. We think it's the best thing and work on his rehab."

On the Browns defense:

"They're No. 1 in the league in takeaways."

On playing against an opportunistic defense:

"We haven't given it away, so we have to keep doing what we're doing. That speaks to your toughness, the toughness of the football team when we go in there, how we protect in the crowd, how we hold up. How we respond. They're going to make some plays, but we've taken care of the football."

On LB Jatavis Brown:

"Jatavis does a fine job. He left the game last week for a little bit. He may miss some practice this week as well, but he's done a fine job. He's a veteran guy. In some ways, it was better because he's a veteran. He's been there, he's done it, and he knew what he was doing. We knew with Kyzir [White], he's a heck of an athlete. You saw the plays he made when he was in there, but we needed him to stay on the field, that's why he can get through some of those learning curves and be that linebacker that we know he can be. Now he's out and Jatavis steps in. He did a good job."

On rookie S Derwin James and Browns rookie CB Denzel Ward:

"Denzel's doing everything I thought he'd do. I loved him coming out of Ohio State. The young man has a lot of confidence, lot of speed, ball skills — and he's a good man corner and zone corner. My guy, I love it. DJ [James], we use DJ in a lot of different places. He does a lot of things for us."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR KEN WHISENHUNT

On QB Philip Rivers:

"Gosh, you know, he's been pretty good since I've been with him, since we've been — in my time with him, that's what I've seen. You know, he really is one of the best players in the league, and he really works at it. That's what you admire so much about him — but this year, this offseason, he really worked hard at his conditioning, his fitness. I think it's one of the things, when you get a little bit older, that becomes more important, and you can see it just in him progressing through the offseason. Not that he hasn't worked in the time before, but, you know, I think he's very comfortable and pleased with the guys that are around him. We had a good feeling at the end of the season last year with this group, and it was pretty much a lot of the same guys back so that certainly helped a lot."

On quarterbacks extending their careers:

"You know what, I think you maybe could have said that a few years ago, but it seems like now with some of the other guys that are doing — you know, a lot of it has to do, I think, with some of the protection that the NFL has given these guys, which I think is important. I think the other thing is having a nutritionist here who talks about things to be healthier, and work, and hydrate — not that, once again, hadn't been talked about before, but I just think the focus now is more on taking care of your bodies. Guys are in better shape at an older age, and he's really playing good football."

On if changes in offensive scheme have prolonged careers of quarterbacks:

"It's interesting. I think offenses have changed because defenses have changed. You get some guys over there that are incredible players that you're having to scheme things to try to get to keep them from getting wrecked in a game. So sometimes you're attacking different games will change based off what you have to do, but I think quarterbacks like Philip that can adapt — and you look at what he was doing 15 years ago as opposed to what he's doing now, the type of passes, the different things that are going on, it's probably a little bit different. I know the terminology for him because he was in the same system for a long time, but the one thing that's been consistent the whole time is he's been a good football player. I don't know. I don't know the answer to that question. I talked a lot, didn't say anything."

On increased scoring and completion percentage across the NFL this year:

"You know, honestly, I couldn't tell you. I don't know. The short passing game has come up, but you look at our yards per attempt or yards per completion, or you look at the number of plays, pass plays that we've had over a certain amount of yards, there are still a lot of plays down the field that are in there. I think, once again, maybe because of the rule changes, maybe because of the way defenses are playing, because they're able to do more things because they have better athletes. They're playing different coverage schemes. You know, you're going through a progression. You take what's there instead of some of the differences that have been there in the past."

On the Browns defense:

"Well, we've played them, I guess, for the last two years. This will be the third time in three years, they've just gotten a lot better. I think they've got a scheme there that's very complex. [Browns Defensive Coordinator] Coach [Gregg] Williams does a great job with that and you can obviously see that he's had some guys that have been there now for a couple of years that are getting it. They have some talented players. A pretty good defense."

On the Browns defensive pressure:

"[It's] through the roof. I think that's part of what they do. I'm certainly not an expert on what [Gregg Williams] does, but he's a good football coach. Granted, he's a great football coach, and he's always had a pressure package that involves a lot of different things and it makes it tough on offense."

On Rivers' completion percentage:

"You know, I think that's kind of what the game, not just us, the game is has evolved to. Having possessions, being able to convert third downs, that's a big part of it. Not having third-and-longs, maybe some of it is because when you get in those third-and-longs, you're seeing a lot of different pressures and things that make it difficult for you. You know, on the surface to sit here as we're talking, it's easy to say that as part of the conversation, but I just think that sometimes you're wired to get into a rhythm of this guy's here, this is where we're looking to go. We didn't get that coverage — okay, I'll get it to the back. Philip's probably been one of the best ever to get it to the backs. He's done that with [Hall of Fame RB LaDainian] L.T. [Tomlinson], he's done that with [former RB] Ryan [Mathews], he's done that now with [RB] Melvin [Gordon III], and that's a big part of it, too. I think we've got some guys here that are very versatile as receivers. Not just the backs or the tight ends or the wide receivers, and they're able to do more things. [WR] Keenan [Allen] is a guy that you can plug in in a bunch of different spots and he can catch a short pass and make it go a long ways and he can win, and if we get it to [WR] Tyrell [Williams] in some of those crossers, there are all kinds of different things that you do. He's able to manage that and go through the progressions and get it done, so a lot of it is because he just operates so fast mentally."

On T Trent Scott and T Sam Tevi:

"You know what, they have done a good job. We went into that game with two tackles last week that were — Sam has played well. He's done a nice job. His first start obviously last year was against the Jets. Having played for a stretch now, he's doing a much better job. You know, I could give credit to these guys. I think a lot of it has to do with the chemistry of the o-line, and just the fact that the next guy steps up and has to do it. He's got some communication from [G Michael] Schofield [III] and [G Dan] Feeney — that really helps. Those guys are good about communicating with the tackles, but, look, it's a credit to those guys. It's not easy to do what they did. Trent last week, for his first game as a rookie, to come in here as an undrafted guy from the start and play and do a good job. You know, we're lucky to have that. [General Manager] Tom [Telesco] and his staff did a great job with those guys."

On receivers and tight ends blocking:

"Well, last week wasn't one of our better games that way. We, up until that point, had been doing pretty good. Some of our issues last week in the run game where we weren't as efficient as we've been is because some of our blocking down field. Some of it was the scheme that we were facing and some changeups that we've done, but I would guess that if you asked those guys, our guys, that's what they'd say. We can be better with some of our blocks down field. Up until that point, you know — [RB] Austin's [Ekeler] catch that went for 40-something yards, tremendous block by Keenan [Allen] on that one, great job. That was a big part of the reason why he was able to get in, but there were a number of others in the runs where we let guys get on our edge or get past us, which we've got to do better with."

On running third down plays short of the line-to-gain:

"I tell you what, it's all different. You can't put one thing on it. Some of it is protection. Some of it is the pressure. Some of it is we've had a history here of getting into guys underneath and being able to run for the first down, and they've been very effective with it. You know, there are a lot of guys with examples of that whether it was a back, whether it was a receiver, part of the scheme is that. A lot of times you have different checks, and that's one of the ones that you get to and we expect it. Now quite honestly, we had two last week that should have been first downs and we didn't execute our technique the right way. So, you know, that's where we've got to continue to get better — but it's literally a combination of it all."

On Rivers' interception rate:

"I think if you look back — and you hate to talk about the past — in 2016, we were pretty good offensively, but we turned the ball over way too much and that hurt us. I think if you can see a marked improvement over the last two years in us being able to be better in that way. You know, it's always a work in progress. We make it a point of talking about that every week. [Running Backs Coach] Alfredo Roberts stands in front of the offensive guys and talks about it every week. Of course, [Head] Coach [Anthony] Lynn really does a good job of that. Hopefully that will continue."

On Rivers throwing fewer interceptions:

"You know what? I wish I could tell you. The natural inclination is to say he's taking less risks, but he's made some tremendous throws that you would say, 'Wow, that was kind of a risky throw.' Well, he got it in there, so it worked. You know what? I don't know. I think maybe we've — our guys have played well as a group. Our line has done a good job. Our receivers, like I said, have done a bunch of different things, whether it's blocking, lining up in different spots, tight ends are contributed and our running backs in have done well. All of those guys together have been playing at a high level, so I think that's helped."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS QUARTERBACK PHILIP RIVERS**On the Cleveland defense:**

"Well, I just remember last year leaving the game thinking it was a heck of a group, really. They're even healthier than they were then, and the they've added some pieces. I think the biggest thing that stands out is that they're taking the ball away. I think they're leading the league in the differential, and it's a good defense. They're playing well. Obviously, I think the longer they're in that scheme together with [Browns Defensive Coordinator] Gregg Williams, the better they're going to be because he's multiple and does a ton of different things. Never lets you get comfortable. If you keep a group together defensively, then the better and better they're going to get at doing it and that's what's showing up this year. They're a few plays away here and there from having won them all this year. They probably feel they should have and they've certainly had an opportunity to win them all, so it will be a heck of a challenge for us."

On the Cleveland fans:

"Yeah, it's a loyal group. Obviously, we were there a few years ago and they had their lone win against us. It's kind of the old-school NFL. There and Kansas City — there are a handful of places that still have that old school NFL feel to it. Obviously, the energy that they'll have this week, you know, with the start they've gotten off to, it will be a heck of a challenge for both the team and the crowd. The noise, and you're always dealing, you never know in Cleveland, with the weather. So we'll have our work cut out for us, for sure."

On Browns QB Baker Mayfield:

"I haven't seen a ton. I've seen a little crossover. I've seen him play against Oakland last week. I was able to see that game of him, offensively. Obviously, he's sparked them. He's playing well enough that they've won a couple. You know, he obviously probably added a lot of energy just in general, both outside the building and inside the building. I thought he was a heck of a player coming out and he's only going to continue to improve the more and more he plays. He certainly plays with a lot of confidence. You know, that's the way to go about it."

On his fast start to the season:

"In some ways, yeah. I think statistically it probably is [one of my best starts]. I look at, especially those two losses and things could have been better in those games, but as I've always said, I don't think one year leads into the other year. However, I felt a steadiness, as I mentioned, as we got in the back half of last year. I kind of felt it all the way through training camp. So it seemed to have kind of carried over, not just myself, but I think offensively, the balance we have, how we're using all our guys, and the weapons, and how the guys are playing up front. So I think it's a collective deal, but certainly we've got a ways to go. It would be good to kind of keep this thing rolling. It's one game at a time on this two-game road stretch that we're about to head on."

On having a higher completion percentage:

"Yeah, I think really I think we finished right around here in 2013 — right around 70 [percent] in 2013. I always had that as a target to try to be there, really, every year. You know, again, I think it's a credit to a lot of things. I think our balance helps with that. It's not been 50. It's not having to have a ton of attempts every week and the protection helps in that, big time. Those guys are doing a heck of a job. The guys on the outside are making catches. You know, you think about [WR] Tyrell's [Williams] catch he made a few weeks ago. That's an incomplete pass to me as far as, it's a negative throw in the sense of accuracy. So I've been accurate in a lot of ways, but the guys on the back end are making plays. So there are a lot of things involved to complete passes, but if you can complete 70 percent and 8-plus [yards] an attempt, and usually not turn it over, then good things are going to happen."

On offensive shifts this season:

"I don't know if it's more emphasis, but I think some of the whole — just more of the speed sweep stuff, just more get the ball out, and let's see if they can tackle. That's what you've seen all over and just keep throwing completions. We've always thought that, especially as an offense. Just keep completing passes, even if they're for three, and four, and eight [yards] — as a defense, it wears on them because all they know is there is another completion. They're not necessarily seeing you throw a completion for three yards and it's a completion. Although it's probably a win for the defense. In the scheme as the game flow goes, you keep throwing completions and usually something happens. Somebody's going to miss a tackle. Somebody's going to break a long one. I think the skilled players, I know they've always been good, but we've got a great group. You just see all over the league how dangerous they are with the ball in their hand. I think get into our guys and see if they can tackle and usually good things happen."

On the receiving ability of RBs Melvin Gordon III and Austin Ekeler:

"I think as a young rookie, as I was just asked about [Saints QB] Drew [Brees], those years with Drew and Cam Cameron, just so many times hearing and then so many times hearing check down, check down. Hey, a shot is not there, check down, and you get 12 yards. I think, and I've always believed that. [Offensive Coordinator Ken] Whis [Whisenhunt] has been the same way in our time together, but I think when you're running it is when it helps. You running the ball the way we're running it, it even adds to that. There have been tons in these last five games where it's play-action, there's guys running deep and there are people all over the place — it's here, Melvin, and you look up, and it's a 13-yard gain. I think it's always been in the back of my head is if it doesn't look good, get these guys the ball because your play action and your linebacker turn and run, and then you dump it to those guys. Their ability — with Austin and Melvin's ability — to catch the ball and do something with it, shoot, you take 12 yards a pop from any of those. Then there's a lot of things we do when they're No. 1 in the progression. Like Austin's touchdown last week or in the screen game. I think we have the ability to be very multiple in both our — who we get the ball to and how we do it scheme-wise. There are so many different things we can do and our guys, credit to the offensive staff for being so creative. It asks a lot of your players. We have a sharp group and a group that enjoys that kind of middle challenge of how much can we do, how much can we handle? I think we ask a lot of it. It's impressive how flexible they are because it's not easy to do all the things we do in multiple formations, shifts and all those things and make it go and still play fast, but our guys handled it well."

On how the running backs rank compared to other tandems in his career:

"Yeah, I tried my hardest to stay away from the best I've ever had, or best I've ever been around, but that's hard to do. It seems wherever you are in the moment, that's where you are. We've had some great back combinations here all the way back to those years in 2006 when it was [Hall of Fame RB LaDainian] L.T. [Tomlinson], [former RB Michael] Mike Turner and [Eagles RB Darren] Sproles — and that stretch went for a while with L.T., and after Mike went, and Sproles. Then you looked up, and shoot, [former RB] Ryan Matthews, [former RB Mike] Tolbert, [former RB Jacob] Hester and [former RB Danny] Woodhead, and the stretch with [former RB] Ronnie Brown, and now it's a — I probably left some guys out, so sorry to the guys I left out — but we've had some good backs that can handle it in these two and all those guys that have a knack for it as well. They do a little bit of everything."

On his conditioning:

"Not so much at this point, but I felt better physically in January than I felt sometimes finishing the season. I just had nothing. I had nothing nagging whatsoever. I usually finish the year, and something hurts for a while into January, but it was one of those we finished hot and I felt really good. It was, 'Gosh, can we start this season right now?' I just remember feeling that way in January and February. So I maybe kind of got back into routine physically working and doing some things sooner than normal. I felt good all offseason into this year so far getting into this. I didn't do a lot of changeup to the offseason, but I haven't been on the ground very much. Those guys up front are doing a heck of a job."

On quarterbacks being fiery and showing emotion:

"Just like every position and in different sports too, pitchers and these guys in the outfield or first basemen are this way. Everybody kind of has a certain prototype, I guess that they see. I think, shoot, at least I've learned I don't know [Browns QB] Baker [Mayfield] at all, I think you've got to know boundaries, but then I think you've got to be yourself. That's when each individual performs the best, when they're themselves while also trying to improve in every area they can, if there is a better way. I think over time if you're yourself and you do it the right way, over time people kind of figure you out."

On T Sam Tevi and T Trent Scott:

"They did a nice job. They did a nice job. You're speaking about [T] Russell [Okung] and [T] Joe [Barksdale] like they're gone forever. I don't think that's the case. There is a chance you may see them both trotting out there this afternoon when you come to the early part of practice, at least hopefully. I thought Trent and Sam did a heck of a job. They battled. I think it's one thing we have with all our group, those first five, and then you mentioned Trent and Sam now have been thrown into that role — Sam more so than Trent, more game experience since Week 1 — but we've got a gritty, tough group, and I'm glad. I'm just excited about the guys we have."

On Saints QB Drew Brees setting the all-time passing yards record:

"Yeah, it was awesome. I certainly was tuned in watching it counting the yards down. A heck of an accomplishment. It's crazy when you think about it, how many yards that is. That's a ton of yards. I think credit to him, obviously, and I heard Drew's comments of him thanking and giving credit to so many people that have had a hand in it, as you expected him to do. Obviously, he's a talented player and passer and all those things. I think it was just hard work and preparation — and really probably maybe more than anything, the belief in himself. I wasn't here during the early times of his first couple years. I know it was a bumpy start, and then I get drafted here in 2004, and shoot, he kept me sitting for those two years. I was able to watch and learn, and he really got it going then, and what he's done in New Orleans the last 13 years or whatever has been remarkable. So I was happy for him. He and I still keep in touch. It was fun to watch: