



QUOTES

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Tuesday, December 11, 2018 | Hoag Performance Center | Costa Mesa, Calif.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH ANTHONY LYNN

Opening Statement:

"Trying to get a whole week into two days. Today will be mostly a mental day. Focus and concentration on weeks like this is very important. Classroom, we'll come out will do a walk through and tomorrow we're going on the plane to Kansas City."

On RB Melvin Gordon III:

"I'm hopeful. I mean, he's one of our better players. I'd like for him to play. We're trying to win every game he can to get into the playoffs — but if he's not ready, he's not going to play."

On balancing the short and long-term benefits of having him for the Thursday game:

"It's tougher, no doubt about it, and not having full practices, things like that. It's going to be a tough evaluation, but he's been running on the side and doing some things full speed and looking better."

On how the defense has evolved:

"It's evolved a lot because we've had injuries on the defensive side of the ball and next-man-up mentality and the guys have done a heck of a job. They are playing well together. I like what I'm seeing but we could be better."

On if the defensive is starting to gel:

"Now that Joey's back, he's getting better every single game. I see things coming together."

On if it's worth the short week to have the extra time on the back-end of a Thursday game:

"I'm not going to answer that one right now, but you know what, everyone has to go through it, so it's just how you handle it. I thought last year we handled this situation really well. We got the results we wanted and that's all that matters."

On what the short week prevents a team from doing in preparation:

"When playing a team like Kansas City that does so many things, you just can't prepare for everything. You have to focus more on what you do best and go in so your guys can play confident and fast."

On Chiefs QB Patrick Mahomes:

"He's having a heck of a season. He's a good talent when they brought him up. That's why they moved up in the draft to go get him. He's done nothing but prove them right and he's getting better seems like every game. His confidence right now is at an all-time high in my opinion."

On if the team prefers to fly under the radar:

"Over dog, underdog, doesn't matter to us. We just take it one week at a time and we just try to be the very best that we can be and what people say about us, we really don't control. We try to pay attention to things that we can control."

On if it helps that the Thursday game is against a division opponent:

"It helps being a division game, a common opponent, for sure — but like I said, they do so many things offensively that that makes it a little tougher but at the same time they have to prepare for us."

On maximizing practice time on a short week:

"I really think if you focus and lock in in the meeting room like you should and like these guys did yesterday, you come out on the field and you go at a slower tempo — but mentally you're there and you're in the present moment, I think you can get just as good of work done as full speed without the collisions and injury. There's a skill and an art to practicing without the pads and walking through, and I think this club is getting better at that. We're doing more of that these days."

On RB Detrez Newsome:

"He's a good, young back. He was undrafted, but he was very productive at his school. He's been productive here. That's why he made this football team and it's fresh legs. I like to see these young guys run at the end of the season."

On the team's losing streak against the Chiefs:

"We've lost three that I know of. I don't know about much, but three is too many for me. We like to stop that streak."

On the short-week strategy:

"You just call coaches that been successful. You just kind of pick their brains on what they did and a lot of it is recovery, the things you do to help your players recover."

On having the extra recovery time after the Thursday game this late in the year:

"It's a Catch-22. You get the rest on the back end, but you don't get the rest right now. So I really don't know how to answer that."

On entering a big game this late in the season:

"I thought the one last week was really big, you know? I mean, every game is really big and that's the way we have to approach it because you can't take anybody lightly in this league. This is an important game. It's a divisional game. Kansas City has made it known we have to go through them if we're going to win this division, so it's a big game but they are all big. Don't kid yourself."

On if the team would add a running back if Gordon and RB Austin Ekeler couldn't play on Thursday:

"We've got [RB Troy] Pope on our practice quad. He's capable if we need it."

On what recovery is important during a short week:

"I'm talking about recovery, the science. We do a lot of things for our guys. Our training department has set up multiple stations for these guys inside to help them recover and recover quicker. Just staying off your feet and taking care of your business when you're not here, so all that is part of recovery."

On Chiefs Head Coach Andy Reid:

"He's very experienced and been successful for a long time. He's been there. He's done it. He's just a good football coach. I think he has a proven track record. He has an outstanding staff. They have done a good job with good players. So they have got a pretty good thing going right now."

On if the staff watched the Chiefs game against Baltimore:

"We watched all of it. Baltimore — it was a physical game and I thought Baltimore played their game and they had a chance to win it. They controlled the ball. They kept [Kansas City's] offense on the sidelines. Sometimes your offense is your best defense. I thought they did a good job of that, but Kansas City found a way to win in the end and that's what they have been doing all season. They have been outscoring people in the fourth quarter."

On takeaways from Baltimore's defensive strategy:

"You know, you can take some things from them, but we have our own defensive scheme and strategy. [Chiefs TE Travis] Kelce just won't stop. You have so many weapons out there. We have a plan for both of these guys and we try to limit their explosive plays."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR KEN WHISENHUNT**On the depth at running back:**

"What is it, what, Week 15 in the NFL? You know, it's not like any other position. Those kinds of things happen. We'll see who shows up — I almost said Sunday — we'll see who shows up Thursday and we'll go from there."

On if the young running backs have had enough reps:

"Well, fortunately, these guys, when we go in training camp and we compete against our defense, they give us a lot of looks, which involve the protection. There's a number of reps from that standpoint. Now, look, I know it's not live. I know it's not like in a game, but you know, some of those guys like [RB] Detrez [Newsome] and guys like [RB] Justin [Jackson] have gotten reps. That's all a part of it. I guess the best way to say it is if you want to play in this league, you have to be able to do those kinds of things. We feel good about our guys. They have worked hard and hopefully, have success."

On if max protection is an option for Thursday:

"In this league, I think that, you know, max protection sometimes is not always as easy as it seems. They give you a lot of looks. This team has good rushers and they give you multiple looks and dealing with the noise and trying to be able to get everybody on the same page is always difficult enough. We work hard on it during the week to try to prepare for it. We feel like our guys will be ready on [Thursday]."

On the Georgia Tech head coaching position:

"Really the timing was what it came down to. So like I said, I was honored to be considered for that. It just couldn't work out with everything else going on. Plus, the focus on our season and what we're doing — it doesn't really matter does it, at this point? I'm happy for them. They have got a coach, we're doing well, so everything's good."

On traveling for a Thursday game:

"You know, it's tough because like right now, it's Tuesday but I couldn't tell you what day it is because you're so focused on trying to get ready. There's so much you have to get done in a short period of time because it is difficult. The thing I will say is that, yes, we do have a formula for how to prepare — how you go about doing it when you do the practices, what you do meeting time-wise and what you think you can do, it helps that it's a division opponent. I think the NFL did a great job with that from the standpoint of having somebody that you're semi-familiar with, plus it seems like they are doing it with a lot more — less travel than across the country. One of the first years they did this when [I was] in Arizona, we played Philadelphia on a Thursday game and that was very difficult. So you know, going into Kansas City is always tough. They have great fans and it's a tough place to play but you know, it is what it is."

On if there is a benefit to flying under the radar:

"Well, I don't know if there's a benefit to that. I think that every team's different. I've been on two teams that have gotten in and had success when they have gotten in and gotten to the Super Bowl and every one of them is different. You know, I've been on a 15-1 team and we lost in a Championship Game. I don't know, other than those guys up in New England who seem to have a pretty good formula for it, however you get in, that's the most important thing, and a lot of it is how you're playing. I think for us, we've played some tough road games. We've gone to some tough places, like if you watch the game last night in Seattle, that was obviously a tough place to play and I think we did a pretty good job of handling that and I think you grow a little bit from that. You get a little bit tougher and maybe you can handle those situations. You know, going into Pittsburgh, it was like a playoff game, a night game, where you focus — so I think it's more about those kind of things helping prepare you for hopefully what's coming."

On if it will be a playoff atmosphere in Kansas City:

"Oh, no question. It's like a playoff atmosphere whether it's the first game or late in the season like this or a big division game. It's a great atmosphere."

On what gets affected in a short week:

"Well, we're fortunate because a lot of times, we have guys that are veteran guys for the most part. We ask them to do a lot during the season and they built up a good base of how we operate, so we're able to be a little bit more flexible in a short week. We can put some things in that we can say, hey, remember when we did this, this is what we did, and they have a base point that they can remember. So that helps us. It's not like this is a first time with some of these guys and you're afraid to put in more than they can handle because — I shouldn't say more than they can handle, but too much, because that's what's really difficult. You have to be careful about what you give these guys because really, you're not going to get a lot of reps during the week. You've got to put them in positions where you think they can be successful but it's just a little bit unsettling because there's so much that you go through in the week for preparation and now it's condensed to two days, it makes it hard."

On the large challenges of a short week:

"I think where this organization has done a great job is recovery of the athletes, that's the most important thing. I think your natural inclination as a coach when you get into one of those situations is make sure your guys are prepared and that means more time in meetings, more time on the field, we've got to feel comfortable that we're ready I think it's more about the physical part of being ready. A lot of it you have to do from a mental standpoint and understand that they have got to be prepared that way, and the biggest thing is the recovery part so that they are ready to go Thursday night. I think that's what's been the biggest revelation."

On how recovery has evolved over time:

"A lot of it is a combination of a lot of things, the yoga part, the stretching part, the physical therapy that is done on some of these athletes, whether it's massage, working the lactic acid out of the muscles, obviously the technical part of it, the therapy that you can get in the training room is important. Our trainers do a great job of that. Every athlete seems to have their own way of preparing and I think having more ability to do different things is what's really advanced this as far as what works for you, how do you prepare — not mentally I'm talking about, but physically, those kinds of things."

On Chiefs S Eric Berry:

"Well, Eric Berry is really good, yes and he's got a lot of — if you go by what I've said earlier, he's got a lot of built-up knowledge about this game and understands how to play. You know, he can go out there and step out there and play well just because he's done that before. To say we would target him, that would be, you know, not necessarily something — it's hard because you don't know for sure if he's going to play. If he gets out there and he plays, you know, I certainly respect him as a player because he's a darned good football player. You know, I would really like to see him make his debut the week after us. We'll see I guess."

On if the days of a short week are longer for the players:

"Not really. They come in later on Monday. We were talking about the Cincinnati game, you know, just cleaning some things up and it's hard to think that that was just two days ago. Feels like it was four days ago, but our players, come in later Monday. Today is not an abnormally long day but like I said, I think the biggest thing is about recovery."

On replay determining what a catch is:

"You know what, I think that that's a fluid situation. The league is working on a lot of those things and trying to get them right. Obviously, the catch thing has worked out because you don't care about that much anymore. Last year nobody knew what a catch was. The league has done a good job of trying to resolve some of the issues that come up and I think the fans have played into that and I think they are trying to get everything right and they are doing a good job of it."

On if there needs to be a clearer definition for a quarterback giving himself up:

"I'd answer that in two ways. First of all, that's above my pay grade — and secondly, if I had an opinion, I don't think they would really care."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR GUS BRADLEY**Opening Statement:**

"This is a great week for us. Guys are excited. It's a mixture of getting our bodies back from the game but also a lot of information. Obviously, Kansas City, they do a lot of things offensively. They do a lot of things that are challenging for a defense, so in a short week to get those points across to our guys, we have played them already, but they have changed since the first game, as well."

On S Derwin James:

"Yeah, he's been good. I think we still look at him every week and try to see where we're going to position him, you know, based on some of the things that a team is doing. He's been good for us. I think the advantage for us with him is that he does have some flexibility. We need him to play back or up closer to the box. He gives us that option when we're game planning."

On how the Chiefs have changed:

"You know what, we played them in the very first game so we are watching college tape, seeing how [Chiefs QB Patrick] Mahomes is, how he reacts to certain things and how he plays the game. You can see that they have gained more confidence with him and allowing him more opportunities to make plays and extend plays. You can just see the trust that he's gained with some of his teammates."

On if the weather will help contain the Kansas City offense:

"I don't know. They will go through the same things. I think regardless of that, it will be an equal playing field and now we've just got to go out there and perform. They are obviously very talented. Their ability, as far as explosive plays, they are probably the team that has more explosive plays than any team we faced. I think our guys have to be in tune for that — that every play, you have to be ready because you don't know when it's going to show up."

On the Kansas City running game:

"Well, you know what, I think what I see is a team that's very committed to the run. It's not a team that's going to go out and throw 70 percent of the time. They are going to try to keep that balance, and I think that balance is what makes it very effective. You know, some of the things they do offensively in the run game, it forces you to maybe situate people a certain way in order to slow down some of the run schemes, and then you know, the play-action off of it. I think where their balance is very impressive."

On Chiefs QB Patrick Mahomes:

"He's unique in his ability to extend plays and his arm strength. I think they incorporate the routes based on his arm strength and they feel like you know what, we are going to have very good protection, so some of the routes the break point is at 10 but this team is at 17. Everything is just a little bit deeper. I think that's the challenge for our defense is to understand that this is not some of the normal things that we see from week-in and week-out, and because of his ability to extend the play, some of those shots turn out not to be 20-yard gains, but a touchdown. I think that's what unique about them — they are very challenging offensively."

On if James reminds him of Chiefs S Eric Berry:

"I haven't watched much of him. I have great respect for him and I know just from our guys talking about him, how much impact he's had on games and they definitely know where he is. He's a guy that's just a really, really good football player. I do know that. There's some guys like that. For us, [CB] Desmond King [II] is just a really, really good football player. He might not be 6-3 and 220 in length but he just makes plays for us — and I'm not comparing those two, but that's what I think of him, it's just a really, really good football player and on top of it, the skill-set."

On Chiefs TE Travis Kelce:

"When you look at the number of explosive plays, both him and [Chiefs WR Tyreek Hill], they are up there around 30 each. So his size, his length, his ability as a route-runner, is something to deal with. I think that our defense, we just have to have great awareness where those guys are and understand the abilities they have and that the quarterback trusts them greatly."

On containing Kelce:

"Well, I think sometimes it's based on their game plan, how they are trying to attack us and what they are trying to do. I think it's just having awareness of where he's at. He's going to make his plays. Both those guys are going to make their plays. Our No. 1 objective is to keep the points down. We feel like our offense has the ability week-in and week-out to score some points and our job defensively is turnovers, getting the ball to our offense but also to keep that point total down."

On Chiefs Head Coach Andy Reid:

"You know, I know of Coach Reid. We have had conversations before. I just have unbelievable respect for him. His flexibility over the years, I think how he looks at his personnel and how he utilizes each skill-set, that's been going back for years and how he attacks defenses. One week you'll see this scheme and another week you see him attack a team this way, and I think he's adjusted well to his personnel. You know, a guy like Patrick Mahomes, you're seeing this offense do things that they didn't do in years past and it's because of his skill-set. I think that's why I have such great respect for him, not only as a coach but as a man."

On facing misdirection from Kansas City in the first matchup:

"Every team is different, they do, they use motions, shifts, different types of motions to try to affect the defense and every time has their philosophy. I think with Kansas City, you see a piece from everybody, so you see it all in one game — the different types of motions that they have and how they are trying to get you to get people in positions that they are not accustomed to being in. I think that's the big thing with their motions. All of a sudden somebody is playing a B-gap and not accustomed to playing the B-gap, and they do a great job with their motions and shifts."

On where James needs to be on the field to be most effective:

"Where's the ball? You know what, we have a lot of good players and we feel confident. He's just a piece of it. I think that he's been a guy that when he is around the ball, has the ability to make plays. His acceleration, his length, his size and he loves the game, and we've got a lot of guys that like that. So I think what I appreciate about our group is that they really are playing well together, and I think that when you have a team that has great camaraderie, great chemistry. It's like adding another Pro Bowl player. I think that's how our defense feels right now is that they accept any challenge that comes their way. They are excited about this opportunity and they trust one another and have great trust. You know, it will be an exciting opportunity for us."

On Chiefs RB Damien Williams:

"You know what, every week we look at running styles of the running backs, and obviously now what's taken place there with a couple different backs and the running styles they have, we have to be aware when he's on the field. His speed, athleticism, ability to cut and jump cuts — he's a guy that we have to be well-aware of. I think in their scheme, they just plug another guy in and they roll. This has been a good move for him."

On picking when to blitz against Kansas City's offense:

"Well, I think that every time you go into a game, you need to understand how we can affect [Patrick Mahomes], and he's a tough one to affect because he does extend the play. I think he does a good job of fielding pressure and fade away from pressure and moving around in the pocket. Alright, if you're going to bring pressure, if there's any opening I can extend the play, that's what he's going to do. You have to pick and choose your times but affecting him, I think, is extremely important."

On his ability to make precise throws outside of the pocket:

"It's tough because he can move up the pocket and get outside the pocket. It's not just losing contain on the outside. He has the ability to extend plays multiple ways, multiple ways. Have a good pass rush plan with them when those situations occur, but he makes good decisions and hasn't been sacked a lot. They have had some pressure on him, obviously, but that's going to be the challenge for us to make sure we got pressure."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS QUARTERBACK PHILIP RIVERS

On prepping for a Thursday game:

"We kind of keep the same thing. Obviously, it's been slightly tweaked since doing them with [Head] Coach [Anthony] Lynn. It was the first year last year, but we did it for Dallas. We kind of kept the same routine. I think it being a division game helps you in the sense that, at least we know who they are. Just the basic schematics that they like to do, just like they know that about us. I think that helps. Then, you just go. You find a way to get in [the work], get prepared and be ready to kick off on Thursday."

On getting RBs Justin Jackson and Detrez Newsome for potentially larger roles this week:

"I think, if that were to be the case, we have a great deal of confidence [in them]. They're two young guys that work at it and are sharp. That certainly helps. I think, certainly, there will be an added emphasis on my part really just to communicate. I don't think it will be so much getting them lined up. They'll be good, but it's just to over-communicate in the noise from a protection standpoint, what route they have and all of those kinds of things. It's more to remind and give peace of mind to take a little bit [of pressure] off of them so that they can play fast. Those two guys, they work hard. They enjoy it, work at it. If that is the case, we'll just have to roll and go."

On the team's struggles against Kansas City:

"It depends where you start the streak. If we go way back, there's not. We can make stats say whatever we want. We kickoff on Thursday. This game, we'll see what happens on Thursday. Each game, to me, stands alone. While I acknowledge that's been the case — it's been a while — but there are guys in this locker room that have only played them one time. Some may haven't even played in any if they weren't playing in Week 1. It's a new game, new week. It'll be a heck of a challenge. It'll be as loud as it's ever been. We'll have to manage those things plus a really good football team."

On the opportunity to clinch a playoff spot:

"I think you embrace it. I think you should be excited about it. These are the games, these are the ones that you dream about when you're little. These are the ones that you talk about in the offseason — having a chance to play and keep your division champ hopes alive and get you a spot in the postseason. These are the games that you want to be in, and we find ourselves in them. It has been a long time, but I think you acknowledge that and you're excited, but then you just have to go play. We don't need more this week than we've had any other week. Just play the way we play and find a way."

On being a team under the radar:

"I don't know, every guy is probably different. I don't know that I pay that much attention to it either way. We know what type of team we have, but we have to keep going. I think that's the biggest thing. You hear me talk about it all week — it's a week-to-week league. We saw last week how crazy it was. Now we start off Week 15. Who knows? Anything can happen, but I don't think those things really affect our guys. At least not that I know of."

On if the time off following the Thursday game worth the short week on the front end:

"I'll tell you on Thursday night at about midnight. I'll let you know. You know, I think it's always a challenge, physically, for the Thursday games, but I do think that, in some way, it's a little bit of a mini-bye on the back end. It kind of worked out, schedule-wise, having a bye right after [the long trip] in Week 7 or 8 — and here again having the long weekend after this one. I don't know. I'm sure guys feel differently. I do think, from an emotional-standpoint, it'll certainly affect that weekend based on the outcome."

On if he would rather have the Thursday game earlier in the season:

"I don't know. Shoot, I don't know that it matters. I think, again, with it being in the division — it seems like the league tries to do that to get division games that you see on Thursday — it does help a little bit. You're just more familiar. If it was an NFC opponent that we saw once every four years, it would be a little bit more of a challenge at least just to get started. That's not to say it's not a challenge, we'll be working right up until the kickoff making sure that we're ready to go against the Chiefs, but it does help start the process. It's not saying give me the depth chart, it's we know who is going to be where so now how are we going to find a way to get first downs and score touchdowns?"

On the physical routine in a short week:

"I think, probably for a lot of guys, it is [more about recovery]. Myself, I feel good. Thankfully, so far this year, I just haven't really had anything linger Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday to where I've even been in jeopardy of missing a practice. Thankfully, I feel a little bit like it's Tuesday today — as it is — but nothing really lingering around. I think your body, because of what we know mentally that we have to get done, you have to go."

On how often he does yoga:

"Never."

On if he does any kind of cryotherapy:

"I'm about as old school as it gets. I mean, maybe an ice pack every once in a while, but that's about it."

On if the body follows the mind on a short week:

"I mean, to me it does. Some of these guys did a heck of a lot more than I did on Sunday. I think it does because on Thursday night, we're going to ramp up and I don't think anybody is going to say, 'Man, I don't feel good.' You get going, the adrenaline gets going and then that atmosphere, it'll be hard not to be ready to go."

On playing at Arrowhead Stadium:

"It's awesome. It's old school. It's old-school NFL with passionate fans, especially when they're having the success that they've had — in the four or five-year run that they've had, they've won a lot of football games. It'll be awesome. I think it's awesome. You get an opportunity to play in these games, it will be a little cool. It's definitely a challenge because you're managing noise and all kinds of things, but it's also the kind of atmosphere that you love playing in."

On if the weather is a concern:

"I mean, I always look at it. I've looked at it every day, probably five times per day, since Sunday's game, but not as a concern like, 'What are we going to do?' You just kind of want to know how it maybe affects you — whether it be what you're going to wear, gloves, no gloves and all of those things. I think, once the ball gets kicked off, you just deal with what you deal with. In the Midwest — I can't remember what year it was, 2008 I think — we warmed up and it was 60 [degrees]. About 45 minutes later, it was 30 [degrees], so you never know. Who knows what it will be for a 7:20 kickoff?"

On Chiefs Head Coach Andy Reid:

"He's awesome. He's an awesome coach. He's had a ton of success in this league with his time in Philadelphia, and before that in Green Bay, I guess it was, and maybe San Francisco. Obviously, in Kansas City, [too]. I got to be around him a little bit at the Pro Bowl. He's just a class guy, coach, person. Obviously, they've done a heck of a job. Having him there, obviously, they lose the offensive coordinator to Chicago [Bears Head Coach Matt Nagy] last year. They lost [Eagles Head Coach Doug] Pederson a few years before that to Philly. They've had some change. He's been the constant. Defensively, having [Chiefs Defensive Coordinator] Bob Sutton has been there the whole time. That continuity has really helped them, schematically. Their foundation is set. I think that's certainly — they've kept a lot of good players — but that continuity has been good for them."

On if this year's preparation was easier than last year's for the Thursday game:

"Yeah, definitely. No question. You just have to go. Monday, it has to be a full day. I mean, you're doing third down stuff and everything. You have to cram it all in on Monday, even looking at red zone. Then you use today to kind of let it all settle in, keep working, and then in some ways it's more of a challenge because it's on the road. You have to go rather than being here. In some ways, it can be a positive. You have a lot of time on a plane and all day Thursday to study our stuff. At that point, you have to study your stuff and make sure that you can call everything in the huddle and get everything communicated that you need to get communicated. It becomes less about them and more about us as we get closer to Thursday."

On Chiefs S Eric Berry:

"He's a heck of a player. Obviously, he hasn't played since Week 1 of last year, I guess. He's an awesome player. Just an awesome football player. He's a heck of a tackler in the run game and can cover you and a lot of ground in the passing game. I don't think it changes our approach [if he plays]. It can't from how we go into the game, but he certainly would be a guy that we would know if he was out there. You know where he is. He's that kind of player."