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Chargers Week 6 Media Availability

Saturday, October 15, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On 'how big of a test' Monday night's game is:

"As big of a test as we've had. This is a really good team that we're playing. They have a lot of outstanding players and coaches, and a lot of guys that we're familiar with. Definitely one of the best teams that we've played all year, for sure."

On WR Keenan Allen:

"Progress. He's playing in pads and has been able to get a lot more full-speed, high-speed yards. The load has increased, and so has the explosiveness of that load. Getting closer. Day-to-day. It's been good to have him out there at practice."

On C Corey Linsley missing today's practice due to an illness:

"Just a 24-hour thing."

On the value of divisional home games:

"Homefield is so important in the NFL. In your division, you have six of these games that are really tight. You know each other well. They count for a lot. Any time that you can play teams the first time around, especially at home, you want to try and take advantage of it. Any time that you're playing in a division like ours, every game — no matter where it's played — is going to be tight. That's why Monday night is going to be an exciting game."

On the defense not 'overlooking' the Broncos' offense:

"You have a decade worth of film of [Broncos QB] Russell Wilson, if you need a reminder — which we've given our guys a reminder of — a decade worth of film of him being one of the top players in the league. You watch [Broncos WR] Courtland Sutton, [Broncos WR] Jerry Jeudy and [Broncos WR] KJ Hamler and that group of players, their skill players — [Broncos RB] Javonte Williams and [Broncos RB] Melvin Gordon, that group of guys — they have all of the pieces to be successful. Sometimes, it just takes time. You can see on the film where maybe that play didn't go down, but it's there. When they get their time and when they find their rhythm, this team is extremely explosive, extremely dynamic. They have our full respect in all three phases because they're a team in all three phases that has a lot of weapons. They have our full respect and attention."

On Allen's 'progression' and 'what he needs to see from him for him to be able to play':

"He's progressing well. This week, getting him in practice was important, being in individual [period] and then being able to run full-speed for long periods of time, but I think getting him into the 11-on-11 where you're going man-to-man against somebody, you need to be able to do that before you go out there and play. I think that's just that next step, getting that last bit of practice underneath of him. We're headed in the right direction, for sure."

On if Allen will 'be able to get in on 11-on-11 next week':

"I hope so. We've been progressing well. Hopefully, he stays on track."

On if there is 'any worry' that T Trey Pipkins III's 'will not be able to go' on Monday night:

"Not to this point. He has handled it well. He's sore and stuff like that, but we fully anticipate him to play, barring a setback between now and then."

On the 'danger' that Broncos' pass rush presents:

"They have a lot of them. They have a lot of pass-rushers both outside and inside. I know that they don't have [Broncos OLB Randy] Gregory, but [Broncos OLB] Bradley Chubb is as good as it gets in the league, he's playing at a really high level. [Broncos LB Baron] Browning is doing a really good job. Then, they have guys that can rush inside, too. [Broncos DT] D.J. Jones, [Broncos DE] Dre'Mont Jones, [Broncos DL Mike] Purcell, that group of guys, [Broncos DL] DeShawn Williams, they have a lot of rushers. Then, their linebackers can rush, too. Then, [Broncos CB] K'Waun Williams, their nickel, can rush. They put people in a lot of known-pass situations and they've really affected the quarterback all year long."

On the 'challenge' that Broncos S Justin Simmons presents:

"Justin [Simmons] is one of the top safeties in the league. When he is playing, everything is going to be different. He's a guy that is always around the football, run game and pass game. He's outstanding in the deep part of the field. He's outstanding in zone coverage. He's an outstanding man-to-man slot cover, open-field tackling, communication. He's seen so much. He's a connector. It's going to be a challenge, for sure."

On 'combating' the Broncos' pass defense and pass rush:

"If all that they're thinking about is pass, then it's not looking good for you. You have to make them worry about more than just that."

On what he has 'learned about' the team over the last two weeks:

"We have real toughness and resilience on the team. I think that we're figuring it out, which is what you have to do early in the season, especially when you go through a lot of transition, it forces you to adjust. I thought that we showed a lot of resilience on the road. We haven't played clean yet, but I think that our team is starting to learn how to play together. I think that there is a process in that happening. But, to get two road wins in a row, that's been big for us."

On K Dustin Hopkins' injury status:

"Yes, Dustin [Hopkins] should be good to go for Monday."

On WR Joshua Palmer' and 'what he's looking for out of him on Monday night':

"I think just playing fast. That's all we want from Josh. He's an outstanding player. When a guy goes out, you don't want anyone to feel like they have to do more than just what they always do. How they get deployed in a gameplan may be a little bit different, but make sure that you play your game and keep improving. We feel like he is a really quality player. He just needs to play fast, be aggressive. That's when he is at his best for us."

On the competition this week at safety between S Alohi Gilman and S Nasir Adderley:

"It's played out well. It's good for our football team. Nas [Adderley] has responded, as we knew he would, and so has Alohi [Gilman]. We know that we have two quality safeties. You guys will know, at the game, how it plays out. I feel like that has been good for our football team. It's not just that position, either, it's everyone on our football team. Sometimes, that happens. Just because that's how the season starts, doesn't mean that that is how it is going to finish. You want that on your team because that means that you have depth. That's what we're trying to establish; you have to earn your way. That's what is going to allow us to be as good as we can be."

On if he will 'look to get' TE Donald Parham Jr.' 'more involved':

"He had a lot of stuff up in the plan that didn't get called. The fact that Donald [Parham Jr.] is one of the three guys active means that he will be fully active in the plan. We're going to do our best to get him the ball. For him, like anybody coming off of that long of a stretch, is just getting into a rhythm. Like Josh [Palmer], playing fast, playing aggressive. Once you get out there, you find that feeling again. Excited for him to have his second game out there in a row."

QUARTERBACK JUSTIN HERBERT

On the Broncos' defense:

"They're a really good defense and they are about as good as we've seen — the combination of their front seven, their defensive backs and their linebackers. They are really well coached. They play sound, fundamental football and they have some really athletic guys on that side of the ball."

On playing against zone defense:

"I think, kind of like I mentioned, they play really sound, fundamental football. They know exactly what their job is, where their weaknesses are, and they have done an incredible job of getting after the passer and causing turnovers and causing incompletions. That's what happens when you play zone football. They've done a really good job of that all year so far."

On the keys to facing the Broncos' pass rush:

"Just to trust my offensive linemen, go through my reads as quickly as I can, get the ball out and try to avoid negative plays."

On playing on *Monday Night Football*:

"I think it's always a great opportunity to play football. Regardless of what day we play, I think it's always a special time for us to go play football. It's, obviously, a really good team that we're going up against, and so we've had to have a good week of practice, good week of preparation to have any chance on Monday."

On Broncos CB Pat Surtain II:

"He's an incredible corner. He's done an incredible job the past two years. One of the best in the league and we've seen him make plays time and time again. He's definitely a guy you have to be aware of out there."

On avoiding sacks when facing pressure:

"I think it's a lot of things. I think it starts with our protection plan. [Offensive Coordinator] Joe Lombardi and [Offensive Line Coach Brendan Nugent] Coach Nuge, they're putting together an incredible protection plan. Then it starts with the guys up front and giving me enough time to get the ball off. [C] Corey [Linsley], [T] Rashawn [Slater], [G] Matt [Feiler], they've done an incredible job the past two years. To have guys like that, [OL] Jamaree [Salyer] and [G] Zion [Johnson] to step up and have guys and have threats out there on the outside, getting the ball to them and going to make something happen, they make my job a lot easier."

On if he is able to feel pressure and avoid negative plays:

"I think it's experience. I think just seeing it, going through it and having the understanding of seeing different pressures and different types of blitzes and knowing where your hot spots [routes] are and knowing where to get the ball out and where your check downs are. I think that's a big part of playing quarterback."

On the culture of the team:

"It's a team and we're committed to each other and we believe really highly in each other. I'm thankful to share the field with these guys out here and they've done an incredible job all year of getting prepared, being close and going out there and fighting every game."

On what Head Coach Brandon Staley has 'instilled' in the team and organization:

"I think just emphasizing that it's a team and we're committed to each other. We're going to compete during practice and we're going to do everything we can to be the best team that we can be."

On the offense with RB Austin Ekeler having success in the last two games:

"I think it's pretty much the same offense. I think Ek is definitely a very talented player and anytime that we can get him the ball, something good is going to happen. It just didn't go our way the first three weeks with him. He's a patient guy and his work ethic hasn't changed over those past five weeks. He's the same guy week in and week out and it's really good to see from him."

On his rib injury:

"I think it's getting better. I think time is probably the best help."

On if he can put a number on how well his ribs feel currently:

"I don't know. As long as it's getting better, I think that's the most important thing."

On the fourth-down play in the Browns game last week:

"Mike [Williams] is definitely one of those guys that it's fourth down, the game is on the line, you're going to have to go to him and you're going to have to make a play. I'm going to trust him and we're going to ride that way. If that is what Coach Staley wants to do and that's the way he believes in us, I know that we believe in him and our defense and all of the other guys that step out there on offense. We're with him, 100 percent."

On if he was expecting the cornerback to play inside on the fourth-down play:

"No. When a route is called, usually the receiver will run that route and Mike has done a really good job of having a feel for that. They got us there and it's an unfortunate situation that we didn't get it. I wouldn't ask Mike to be able to just completely change the route because then it affects my timing. If I do end up throwing a slant and he's running something else, it's a bad look. I've got full confidence in Mike, our offensive line, and all of those guys that we ran that play."

On if he was looking at WR DeAndre Carter on the fourth down play:

"I'd have to take a look at it. It's been a while. We've moved on to Denver. Whatever happened there happened and we got on and we'll be better because of it."

On the Broncos pass rush:

"They've done a really good job of getting after the passer. That's when incompletions, turnovers, fumbles, things like that, happen. They've been able to do that all year and they have a really impressive front seven. We have to have a good plan for those guys."