

## Chargers Week 14 Media Availability

Friday, December 8, 2023 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

### HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

#### **On DB Deane Leonard's ankle/heel injury:**

"He had kind of like a heel contusion — similar to [S] Alohi [Gilman], what he went through earlier in the season — during the game. He played through it. Then, after the game, was sore."

#### **On if CB Michael Davis will start at cornerback in Leonard's place:**

"That's right."

#### **On 'the plan at running back':**

"All of the guys practiced well this week. You guys will see it on Sunday. I was pleased with the way that all of our guys competed in practice this week."

#### **On focusing on the run game this week at practice:**

"Just trying to improve our offense, in general, and we feel like that is an aspect that is not exclusive to the running back position. Our running game is about all 11 guys. Just trying to make the adjustments so that we can improve in that area down the stretch here."

#### **On WR Joshua Palmer's performance in practice this week:**

"It was good to have him at practice this week. I think that's how you gain confidence. There's no timeline yet, but just him being able to be out on the practice field, that is going to create confidence for him."

#### **On 'how much early preparation' he has conducted in advance of next week's game against the Raiders on *Thursday Night Football*:**

"Zero."

#### **On current focus and the 'quick turnaround' to playing the Raiders:**

"Denver. We'll shift gears after Sunday."

#### **On 'how difficult' the 'quick turnaround' is leading into *Thursday Night Football*:**

"It's part of the job, but it's a cool part of the job. The tight turnarounds, they're the toughest for the players. Coaches, we just get on with it. What you do in seven days, you have to do in four days."

#### **On if preparations are 'easier when it's a division opponent' when playing on *Thursday Night Football*:**

"They've changed a lot since the last time that we've played them. There have been some things that have happened that are different. But, with the NFL, those Thursday night games are special. We'll be ready."

## **SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR RYAN FICKEN**

### **Opening statement:**

"I thought we had a good week of practice this week. Obviously, we're looking forward to the challenge against Denver. I was proud of our guys for this past week to help our team win the football game. Our sights are on the Denver Broncos coming in here. We know it's a divisional game. We have to make sure we have to a great job because it's a really good unit that we're about to face. We have to make sure that we're prepared and I think those guys are."

### **On the Patriots game:**

"I thought, just as a unit, that we were able to impact the game. As a unit, just to help our team win. That's the first and foremost goal that we're trying to do, is impact the game in a positive way to help our team with a W. It doesn't matter how we go ahead and get it done, but I was really proud in that situation. Guys just filling in that role when other guys go down. I'm excited about that. I'm just proud of the guys that they were able to go ahead and put their stamp on it. Right now, that one is obviously behind us. We have to get ready for the Broncos."

### **On the operation in the rain:**

"It was nice to see that. There were, obviously, some things that we need to improve on that we have to go ahead and tighten up a little bit. That's with every situation. It doesn't matter the game. Coming out, there are things that we have to improve on. Given those conditions, I was really proud of the guys and the way they operated out there. They worked hard throughout the course of the week with the certain drills that we were doing. I was proud that they embraced it and took the challenge. It was nice to see them go out there and execute."

### **On the mentality:**

"I think the biggest thing is just being realistic with these guys. I don't think we have to sugarcoat it, but we have to make sure that we talk to them about what the truth is and what the expectations are. We have to make sure every time and every play that we go out there, that we go out there and execute, win our assignment and use our technique and fundamentals. It starts by making sure that we have a good foundation. It starts with the base that we can always build or lean on down the road."

### **On P JK Scott:**

"He did a great job, but again, it starts with the whole unit and the team. It starts with the operation with [LS] Josh [Harris] throwing those snaps back where he's able to catch them and feel confident that he can step into those. Obviously, the protection and the guys going down and making plays. He's hitting the ball well right now. That one, again, is behind us. We have to make sure that we can continue to build on that. There's a couple of things that we could have done better, still. That's what he's all about. He's a professional. He knows he can go ahead and continue to improve."

### **On Scott's one touchback punt:**

"It was obviously close [to being blocked]. That's one of the things that we talked about what we have to go ahead and improve on. Just the wrong protection. We talked about it. We're good to go. We're confident in that. The good thing about JK though, is that he's really timely with his operation. He gives us the best chance to go ahead and get those punts off every time. That starts with the operation and continuing to build on the protection part."

### **On ranking No. 1 in the NFL at Special Teams DVOA:**

"Right now, the only stat that we really care about is how we get that win column going. Making sure that we keep adding to that win column because that's the biggest thing, is making sure that we're impacting our team to help win some football games. However it shakes out, we just have to make sure we play complementary football and take one play at a time. Making sure we continue to build. Making sure we put our offense and defense in good field position so that we can go ahead and help win those games."