

Chargers Week 7 Media Availability

Thursday, October 19, 2023 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR KELLEN MOORE

On his takeaways from last week's game against the Cowboys:

"We just didn't play well enough. We missed some opportunities. At the end of the day, I felt like we had our chances and just didn't get done."

On what led to the offense's performance and the 'inability to establish the run':

"A combination. I thought that they played, certainly, some man [coverage] on the back end, got the extra guy in the box early, which DQ [Cowboys Defensive Coordinator Dan Quinn] is always going to do, which he does a phenomenal job with. I thought that their D-line played well. They played well and we just weren't able to find a rhythm and opportunity to run the ball. Certainly, against that team, you'd like to run the ball better, just to control those variables because of the pass-rush component."

On QB Justin Herbert's performance in the game:

"Obviously, Justin [Herbert], like anyone, when you miss a couple — and those are frustrating for him, just because they're so rare and you don't expect that to happen a whole lot. He'll respond the whole way, he always does. Again, as a whole team, we had opportunities that we missed, whether it be passing plays, run plays, play calls, all of that sort of stuff. That's the unfortunate process when you lose."

On if Herbert's finger injury impacted 'how much' the offense went under center:

"You're conscious of it. Certainly, there were some opportunities to potentially go under center, and we just had the variables that we could go [under center], we could stay in shotgun or pistol and whatnot. Certainly, the numbers would say that we probably did it a limited number of times, and that was probably what we expected, for the most part."

On WR Quentin Johnston's development:

"We're really close. We certainly have to give him some more opportunities, and that's on me. We have to find those. He's been working hard. He's been doing a really good job. I think that we're close. It doesn't take a whole lot to get the thing going with him. He has done a nice job out here. Certainly, [WR] Keenan [Allen] and [WR] Josh [Palmer] have gotten a lot of targets, and that's part of the process. Certainly, we'd like to get Q going a little bit more, as well."

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR DERRICK ANSLEY

On preparing for the Chiefs' offense:

"It's interesting. We've played [Chiefs QB] Patrick [Mahomes] four times since we've been here. I played him twice in 2018 when I was at Oakland. He's a handful, the whole offense is a handful. It starts with Patrick, it starts with [Chiefs TE] Travis [Kelce], it also starts with [Chiefs RB Isiah] Pacheco, the running back — they have a three-headed monster that's as good as any three in the league. We have our work cut out for us. A lot of respect for those guys in Kansas City."

On if this week is a 'different kind of week':

"I wouldn't say different. Every week has its different challenges. Obviously, this is an AFC West opponent, and it's a rival, so we're going to approach it as such and get ready to go play."

On if anything Mahomes does 'surprises' him:

"No. That's how he plays. He's talented, very instinctive, can hear the rush, can feel the rush, can smell the rush. He knows where everybody is on the field at all times. A really good field commander. We've seen him do just about everything that he can with the ball, unorthodox — from the platform, outside of the pocket. We have to do a really good job of staying connected on the back end, having respect for our pass-rush lanes and integrity in the box, and try to keep him in the pocket as much as we can."

On Mahomes 'out of the pocket':

"That's when explosive plays start to happen. Guys get uncovered, he throws guys uncovered. They're very in-sync when it gets to a scramble type of situation, a loose-play type of operation. I don't know if they practice that, but it looks like it [*laughter*]. We have to do a really good job of being disciplined in our pass-rush lanes, contain, and then being disciplined in the back seven of who has who and when they have them."

On similarities between Mahomes and Cowboys QB Dak Prescott, the Chargers' opponent last week:

"Very similar, in terms of both of them being dual-threat. Both of them are strong players, from the lower-body down. Both of them are very smart. They have strong arms, out of the pocket and inside of the pocket. Patrick [Mahomes] plays a lot more ad-lib style and Dak [Prescott] makes some really good throws, as well, and he scrambled around. They're similar, but I wouldn't say they are the same, they have some similar traits."

On the third-down defense:

"There's room for improvement. We've done some good stuff. Obviously, we've assisted some things, from our perspective, with offense the and with penalties, just being not clean. We have to do a really good job of coaching that better and continuing to educate our guys what that five-yard threshold is, where your hands can and can't go, lowering our target area, lowering our hand placement when we jam people. All of those things are fundamental. It starts with us, as coaches, to clean that up, and, on Friday afternoon, to continue to show them the league and educate them on the rules and the officiating, what they're looking for and what they call."

On if he 'looks at the penalty situation optimistically' due to 'the defense getting the initial stop':

"We are what the numbers say. We're responsible for getting off the field and giving [QB] Justin [Herbert] more opportunities. We can't continue to assist drives, we have to close the door. We're rushing the passer pretty well and we're covering pretty well in some spots. We just have to eliminate the things that we can control and play cleaner. We have to coach cleaner. We have to watch it closely at practice. I'll tell you one thing, nobody is going out there trying to foul, I can tell you that right now. But, the fact of the matter is that we have, and we have to take that out. We're responsible for that."

On if S Derwin James Jr. has to 'adjust his game' based off of recent penalties:

"Any time you get the unnecessary roughness penalties, or the leading with the head, he is definitely frustrated. But, he is a pro. He's very smart, very intelligent. He knows what he needs to do to correct those things. He had some hits in the game that wasn't leading with the head. Some of those things are bang-bang. We have to continue to do a better job of educating him of what it looks like when he does go in those positions and when he doesn't go in those positions because, again, nobody cares on this team more than number 3. He has a big heart. He doesn't want to do anything to hurt the team. We have to do a good job, as coaches, of continuing to develop his strike zone and helping him be the player that he wants to be."

On what 'encourages' him about the run defense as of late:

"I think the main thing is that we're playing as 11 guys on the same page. Everybody is excited about stopping the run, and that's contagious. The front is playing really, really good. Hats off to [Defensive Run Game Coordinator/Defensive Line Coach] Jay Rodgers and [Outside Linebackers Coach] Giff Smith, the front seven is playing really rugged and tough, especially our edges and inside guys. [Linebackers Coach] Jeff Howard has done a really good job with the inside linebackers. K9 [LB Kenneth Murray Jr.] is getting downhill, and he's a full lunch, and same with [LB] Eric Kendricks, kind of running the show out there. We have gotten better at crack-replace from our corners and better safety fits from our safeties. It's all 11 guys doing that at the same time for a long period of time. That's how you stop the run."

On if the run defense developing is a 'natural progression':

"It's a credit to [General Manager] Tom [Telesco] and [Head Coach] Brandon [Staley] of bringing the right personnel in here. We have the body types inside. [DL] Otito [Ogbonnia] popped back in there today. It was good to see him back out there. We have really good people inside and really good edge setters. DJ [James Jr.] is one of the best run-fitting safeties in the league, so that helps. We just have to continue to work that and get our pass defense to match our run defense, and then we'll have something."