

Chargers Media Availability

Monday, October 3, 2022 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On if CB J.C. Jackson 'is in good shape' following yesterday's game:

"He is in good shape."

On if he 'anticipates any issues' involving Jackson's ankle entering Week 5:

"We do not."

On his assessment of the performance of the EDGE group yesterday:

"I thought that our edge players, all four of them, played at a high level. I thought that those three, specifically, all did their jobs well and were effective in their roles. I thought that that mixture allowed us to keep fresh bodies, to be able to rush at the end. They were very good in their run defense, setting edges, and in their coverage responsibilities. I felt like we were able to keep more fresh bodies in there. Credit to [Outside Linebackers Coach] Giff Smith for getting [OLB] Derrek [Tuszka] ready to play, and his teammates. [LB] Kyle Van Noy, just being able to come in there and start the game for us and really allowing us to play the way that we want to play. [OLB] Chris [Rumph II], I thought, was effective. I thought that it was a solid group effort. [OLB] Khalil [Mack], I thought, played a really high-level game for us."

On QB Justin Herbert 'looking more comfortable' yesterday:

"I'm not going to speak for Justin [Herbert], specifically, but I can tell you that he had a good rhythm in practice last week. I think him being able to practice and get the requisite reps to really feel your best, you're truly prepared to go out there and play. Then, managing the unknown of how he was feeling last week, that's very tough when you've never been through it. I think just having a better sense of how you're going to feel. Out of all of the things that he did yesterday, I thought that he led our football team beautifully. I thought that he affected his teammates as well as I've seen him, since I've been the head coach. Beyond his performance on the field, I thought that he led our football team at a really high level yesterday."

On his perspective of the play that resulted in Herbert being penalized for intentional grounding near the end of the first half:

"There are these rules about commenting on things like that, which will prevent me from proceeding. I will leave it at that."

On the play being a 'free play' and Herbert 'throwing it away':

"There was a lot that happened before that throw that I am reserving comment on. You know that that is not my style. There are things that you are kind of forced to do."

On OL Jamaree Salyer's performance yesterday:

"I'll stand on my comments after the game. Poised, strong, assignment-sound. I stand behind what I said about room for improvement. Good to get him out there and experience the game with his teammates. He's a work-in-progress. We have to make sure that we continue to work at his game and get him in that comfort zone. I thought that his teammates helped him get into a good rhythm. I felt like he finished the game playing well and giving us a chance to close that game out there on that last drive."

On RB Austin Ekeler's fourth-and-one conversion 'looking similar' to Ekeler's third touchdown and relating that comparison to Vikings Head Coach Kevin O'Connell's phrase, 'Elusion of complexity,' on the play execution:

"I don't know if Kevin O'Connell invented that saying [*laughter*]. He's one of my best friends and I'm extremely confident that that didn't come from him [*laughter*]. He got a big win the other day in London, so I'm happy for him. What you want to try and do is keep your core plays in every plan, and make sure that you give the defense something really tough to look at, to adjust to. You can, maybe, run similar concepts, but forcing the defense to defend them because you forced them to adjust a different way. That's something that good offenses and defenses do, they run their core plays, but they force you to adjust so that, maybe, you're not as prepared for that play. I thought it was a good design by [Offensive Coordinator] Joe [Lombardi] and our offensive staff. Certainly, timely football calls, in terms of the timing that you activate those calls, I think timing is of the essence. I thought that those were called at really good times, as you can see, in terms of the result. We got the coverages that we were hoping for, the adjustments that we were hoping for. Our guys executed really well."

On DL Morgan Fox's performance through the first four games:

"Like he always plays; tough, rugged, ball-playing Jesse, versatile, motor, play-maker. He can play better, he will tell you that he can play better, but he was very effective yesterday in the game. I thought that our front seven played really well yesterday. I thought that we rushed really well together and Foxy did a really nice job for us."

On the phrase, 'ball-playing Jesse,' and its origin:

"Definitely not [from] me. I think I heard it when I was a much younger man. Just a phrase that is endearing. It's a good thing, a good description. It's a good thing to be called that."

On an ESPN report involving OLB Joey Bosa 'saying that he is out eight-to-10 weeks':

"I'd love to know the origin of that report. I think that it's fair to say that, I think, the groin timeline is somewhere in that six-to-, perhaps, on the high side, ten [weeks]. I think that in that range is what most would tell you. I think that you can continue to do your own research on that. His brother, [49ers DL] Nick [Bosa], went through something similar. There was a timeline out there that, I think, you can look back on, in terms of what it did for Nick. But, we got good news, in terms of he'll be back this season, which I think is the most encouraging sign for us. We just have to make sure that we bring him back the right way. I know that, in talking to Joey about Nick's own experience, was that whenever he came back, he was ready to play football. They made sure that he was ready to play, and play like he can. We have to make sure, no matter what that timeline is, that we make sure that Joey is back and really can play like himself. Proceeding with caution so that you don't have a setback, at least that's the goal."

On C Corey Linsley and 'how he came out of the game' relative to his knee:

"Positive from the game. Normal soreness, but no setback, per se. Positive for us."

On WR Keenan Allen's injury status:

"He's day-to-day. Like I said last week, [he] didn't make enough progress. I felt something in that practice that you guys were at. We're just going to make sure that we are careful. I would say day-to-day."

On additional injury updates following yesterday's game:

"The guys that we talked about postgame, [WR] Josh [Palmer] with his foot/ankle thing, he is OK, just had to get it taped. I think that you'll see him out at practice on Wednesday. [DL] Sebastian [Joseph-Day] just has to splint his finger thing. He'll be fine. He should be at practice. I think that's it."

On T Rashawn Slater and ‘NFL Network reporting that Slater could possibly return at some point this season’ and ‘if he can confirm that’:

“On the timeline side of things, with the bicep, I think that they talked about three, three-and-a-half months, that would, sort of, be the soonest that you could come back. There’s, obviously, a possibility that we’re shooting for. I think that that’s news that gives a player hope to shoot for. Again, just making sure that he’s ready. I think that there is that timeline that there is a possibility. We’re going to try and shoot for it. If you know Rashawn [Slater], he’ll do his best to get there.”

On WR Michael Bandy’s performance yesterday:

“Good throw-and-catch from Justin [Herbert] on the sideline in two-minute. I felt that that was a big, big play for us because we got the big fourth down stop, and then, for us to go down there and drive and finish that thing with three points, that was really big going into the half. He was able to catch the one on the sideline, got out of bounds, and then, on the third down, Justin was able to drift and find him. Mike has to make sure that he stays out of bounds there so that we don’t have to use the timeout. He fills in. He can play multiple spots in a moment’s notice. He also did a nice job for us at gunner. He can play gunner, and play a little special teams for us, as well. Solid performance for him. Continue to improve his game.”

On the ‘thought process’ of keeping DL Christian Covington active ‘over’ DL Otito Ogbornia:

“Good question. That’s not a reflection of Otito, at all. It was an adjustment game up front. They deploy some bigger personnel groupings. They had shown some exotic looks up front in the run game. We wanted to make sure that we had an experienced player in there to activate those adjustments. We really wanted Sebastian [Joseph-Day] in the middle yesterday, so we wanted to a little bit more versatility on the edge. Otito is playing well for us. We’re not down on Otito, at all, quite the opposite, but just wanted to make sure that we had the best player for that week. It’ll be week to week with those guys in trying to put the best combination together. Cov did a nice job for us yesterday, he was solid. As you guys have seen with Otito, Otito is the right guy to be coaching. He has gotten some experience here in the first several games. We look for him to continue to improve.”

On DL Jerry Tillery’s performance yesterday:

“I thought that Jerry [Tillery] was active in the run game and pass game. He’s been improving his technique. Obviously, a big play on the sack after the turnover. That really gave us a lift, stopping their momentum on that sack fumble. He has to continue to improve, stay assignment-sound and keep stacking good games. He played a good game yesterday, for sure.”

On the kickoff return unit’s performance and the challenge that the Texans’ kickoff coverage unit presented:

“Houston has a good kickoff team. They have good team speed, and they have good size to go along with that. It felt like, on one of the returns, it could have been a splitter, we were just one [block] short early in the game. The last two, we just didn’t execute well, at all. We lost at the point of attack on some of our combinations. D.C. [WR DeAndre Carter] kind of hung a left on the one that he fumbled and needed to keep it on track. We didn’t execute well enough on those two returns. We lost a lot of momentum from those two returns. We need to definitely improve in that phase and continue to coach better. I liked the way that we executed on teams outside of those two returns. On punt return, I thought that we did a nice job — I thought that D.C. did a nice job — but those two returns, our last two kickoff returns, were definitely not our best stuff.”

On traveling to Cleveland this weekend to face the Browns and ‘the number of ticket requests’ that he has received thus far:

“No. I’m excited to see my family and friends. I know that there will be a lot of people there. The actual requests, that’s been handled for a long time, before this week. I’m definitely looking forward to feeling the presence of my loved ones there. I don’t know how many I’m going to get to see, but it’ll be special going back home, for sure.”

On 'giving up big runs' earlier in the season and preparing to defend Browns RBs Nick Chubb and Kareem Hunt:

"Each run has a different story, for sure. It's just trusting the run-fit. In all of those runs, they've been to the perimeter. We have to have better perimeter run support. That's where it starts. There are going to be some plays that get to the perimeter. We have to make sure that we support the run better on the perimeter. There are a lot of different types of run support, obviously. We have to support the run better in those instances. Then, if the run splits the second level, then we need to be able to knock the run down for a 10-yard game. That's what's happened, we haven't had good enough support at the point of attack. Then, we didn't knock the runs down. Obviously, the one against Jacksonville was different because it was a short-yardage run and you have everybody up there. The Kansas City and the Texans runs are more similar. Run support, and then being able to knock the run down at the last line of defense, that's what needs to happen."

On if TE Donald Parham Jr. 'will be able to play this week':

"We're shooting for that. Like I told you guys last week, I really wanted to get him back into practice and make sure that he had his legs underneath of him, getting into pads and really experiencing practice. We're hoping that another full week of practice can get him to the game on Sunday against Cleveland."

On the performance of the LBs Drue Tranquill and Kenneth Murray Jr. thus far this season:

"Very pleased with those two. I think that Drue [Tranquill] is playing at a very high level through four games. He's playing as well as anybody on our defense, if not the best on our defense right now. Just really proud of his progress, the way he's leading our unit. He's active in all ways; run game, pass game, pass rush. He's commanding the middle of the defense. I thought that Kenneth [Murray Jr.] has made big strides. He's still improving, but I think that he's been active. He's been around the football. He has been a productive blitzer for us. The more that he plays, the better he is going to get. Those two guys are developing that chemistry together. They're kind of at the beginning of that this season. They're off to a good start."

On 'concern' surrounding the defense's performance in the second half of games:

"The third quarter, for us, is where my focus has been because, certainly, in the first quarter of the game, the first half of games, I thought that we've been outstanding. In the third quarter, as a team — not just defensively, as a team — we haven't played well enough, and each of those games has a little bit of a different story. We definitely need to take control when we make those adjustments in the second half, making sure that we take the to the field, making sure that we execute. I thought that we got off to a good start in the Houston game. We had a really good first drive, and then there was a third-and-seven that was kind of a killer, we didn't have very good execution. If you execute how we should there, then the momentum of that game is different. That's the same way on offense. We missed a couple of big plays and possibilities. Then, a couple of third downs don't go your way, then, all of a sudden, you've lost your juice a little bit, your momentum. Just have to focus on execution and making sure that we have that right focus, that right energy, because the third quarters haven't been good to us this year, so far."

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN JAMAREE SALYER

On making his first NFL start:

“I think it went well. Took some adjusting to kind of get those game reps going back at left tackle. Had some really good looks this week from guys on the practice squad — gave me really good looks, so it wasn’t too bad. The game is always different. Different type of juice, different type of atmosphere and different players. It was kind of an adjustment at first, but eventually got back into the swing of things and I felt pretty good. Some learning things, a learning curve, for sure. Things I still have to fix. I’m excited.”

On evaluating his play after watching the tape:

“Kind of similar to how I felt during the game. I kind of knew that I played a decent game, but just kind of getting back into the swing of things. There are things I have to fix. Things that are just different. Obviously, I didn’t get a lot of reps in practice at left tackle, so it just means I kind of had to learn on the fly and some of those mistakes kind of showed up in the game. I just want to keep harping and fixing on those and keep sharpening the axe and becoming the best player I can be.”

On receiving the game ball yesterday:

“I did get a game ball. Equipment has it right now. They are getting the inscription put on it and stuff like that. Maybe I’ll frame it. Put it in a glass frame and let my mom keep it, I guess.”

On his emotions before the game:

“It was a special moment for me, obviously. Just having my mom be there and having my high school coach be there. It was a very special moment for me because we talked about this a lot — that the moment will come and just being ready for it, no matter how it shows up. It just so happened to show up at left tackle. It was a special moment for me. For me, the thing I felt the most is just appreciative that the coach and the people in this organization believed in me, my teammates. They expressed that to me before the game. The main thing they were saying is, ‘We believe in you. Don’t worry about it. You’re here because we believe in you.’ That meant a lot to me. It made me want to play to the best of my ability. I was very blessed to have that belief from my teammates.”

On the ‘influence and guidance’ he received from T Rashawn Slater:

“He’s been there every step of the way, honestly. Kind of sitting me down right after he heard the news. He talked to me about what he thought about their rushers and their rush plan and kind of how he does — his thinking process in pass protection. Anything he can impress upon me before the game, and even during the game, he was there, pretty much coaching me on the sideline. He’s been there every step of the way. I couldn’t learn from a better person. He’s a great dude and a lot of guys could just say, ‘I’m hurt. I’m going to go handle me.’ He stuck around. He made sure I was good. I’m very thankful for that.”

On whom was his ‘sounding board’ before making his first NFL start:

“Rashawn [Slater], my [Offensive Line Coach Brendan Nugent] O-line coach, of course. Just talking me through it saying, ‘We believe in you. Don’t worry about it. We’re going to make sure that you are good.’ [G] Matt Feiler playing next to me, talking me through the game plan. Making sure that whatever we have to do to work together, it’s settled and so we can just go play and be comfortable on Sunday and go play to the best of our abilities. Those are kind of the main guys. [C] Corey [Linsley] is always there coaching through game plan, even [G] Zion [Johnson]. Everybody was just saying, ‘We know it’s your first spin around the block, so just don’t worry about it. We got you.’”

On the moment it hit for him that he was making his first NFL start:

“I felt that before the game. I felt that on the bus to the stadium. I was locked in from the word go. I woke up early, so I didn’t have a lot of time to just sit around. It was like 6:30 when we were up and we’re going. When I pulled up to the stadium, that was kind of my moment to be like, ‘Alright, let’s do it.’”

On holding himself to a high standard:

"I remember my mom saying that when I was younger is that I'm a perfectionist. I try to do things to the best of my ability. When I don't or when I'm not able to, it really bothers me because I've always been the person that — I don't like letting people down, especially people that believe in me. I don't like letting people down, so I just try to be the best version of myself in anything I do. I hate to let my other teammates on the team down. I always try to be hard on myself, be critical on myself so that I don't have to worry about somebody else doing it for me."

On if he reminisces on his first NFL start:

"This is kind of something I just learned from playing for [Georgia Head] Coach [Kirby] Smart, and even playing here for [Chargers Head] Coach [Brandon] Staley. It's a quick turnaround. The game was yesterday and today we're moving on to the next team. It's a quick turnaround. You enjoy it for the night, maybe even enjoy it for the next day, but after that, the film is moving on. We're worrying about a new team, a new challenge. It's exciting. That's one of the special parts about football is it never stops and I love that part of the game."

On Browns DE Myles Garrett and DE Jadeveon Clowney:

"Two freakishly athletic specimens. Really great players. They have been doing it for a minute now, being special and doing what they do. I haven't had a chance to really super deep dive into it, but I'm excited to get into it, kind of closing the chapter on this last game. That's kind of what today is around here. I'm excited for the challenge. I've never shied away from any challenge, shied away from any person. I'm excited for the challenge and look forward to it."

On if Georgia Head Coach Kirby Smart reached out for him before yesterday's game:

"No. I haven't heard from him. Knowing him, he's very locked in on what he's doing, what he's got going on. They're kind of in the heat of SEC play. I know he will probably at some point when he gets the moment to sit down and actually breathe. Knowing Coach Smart, it's not really his style. He's locked in. I know that about him. I'm not really worried about it."

WIDE RECEIVER MIKE WILLIAMS

On the Texans' pass coverage tendencies yesterday:

"They were playing a lot of Cover 2, so we were just trying to find the holes in the zones and catch the ball while running. That was the main thing. Just be patient, find the spots in the zones and make some yards after the catch."

On Texans CB Derek Stingley Jr.:

"He's pretty good. All respect to him. He got a little banged up at the end, but he showed his toughness by just coming back in the game. He's a pretty good player. It's still early on for him, so he can be a lot better. I respect him."

On if QB Justin Herbert is 'throwing the ball any different' with his injury:

"It's the same. I feel like it depends on what type of pass he's throwing. I feel like everything is the same."

On his 50-yard catch yesterday:

"They were playing Cover 2. Somebody busted the coverage on defense, obviously, because I was so wide open. I caught the ball and just tried to score a touchdown."

On his reaction to 'reading a busted coverage':

"Hope the quarterback sees me [*laughter*]. That's the main thing. If Justin [Herbert] sees me at that moment, it's going to be a big play. That's the main thing. If somebody falls or you're running scot-free, you just hope the quarterback sees you."

On his assessment of the team through four games:

"We still have a lot to do. We still have a lot to grow as a complete team. We want to have games where we come out and just dominate our opponent. We just have to come out, watch this film today, put it behind us, and focus on Cleveland."

On how the team has 'come together off the field':

"We pretty much hang out. A lot of people have families and other stuff they have to deal with after they are done here at the office. We try to hang out as a group and do stuff off the field, also."

On WR Keenan Allen and 'how much he factors into the offense's potential':

"Everybody knows what Keenan [Allen] is capable of doing. He's been doing it for 10 years. Everybody knows what we are getting when Keenan comes back. We are getting a dominant player out there at wide out to help us get some more touches, some touchdowns, and keep this thing rolling. Right now, he is just trying to get his situation right and, hopefully, we can get him back soon to get this thing rolling."

On explosive plays:

"That's big. For us, in our offensive room, we always talk about getting explosive plays. That's a big part of the offense, getting explosives. I feel like it brings a lot of energy to the group. The defense sees it and it gets the momentum going for us. We're always talking about explosive plays in our offensive room."