

Chargers Head Coach Jim Harbaugh Introductory Press Conference

Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024 ⚡ YouTube Theater at SoFi Stadium ⚡ Inglewood, Calif.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS OWNER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD DEAN SPANOS

"You should have seen the smile on [Head Coach] Jim's [Harbaugh] face when we first showed him that video. It was from ear-to-ear. Good afternoon and thank you for all coming today. When I was talking to Jim this past Tuesday, as he sat on the tarmac in Michigan — his flight out here was delayed because of snow. I told him how appropriate it was that his press conference was scheduled for today. He asked, 'Why's that?' I said, 'You're bringing the storm with you. It's supposed to rain all day Thursday.' There was a brief pause and he replied, 'Dean, we are the storm.' Coach, well said. Thank you.

"Jim, let me be the first to officially welcome you to Los Angeles, to the Chargers. Sarah [Harbaugh] and you're entire family, I could just tell you from myself, my family, the organization and the entire community how grateful we are that you're here and how excited we are that you're here. Thank you. I know this last week that we've talked about a lot of different things. One of them being everyone's expectations and the challenges that those can present. You said you welcome the challenges. You welcome the hard work. You welcome the sacrifice. You welcome the pressure. You welcome it all because the rewards at the end of the day, as you say, are 'So darn good.' I want you to know that my family, myself and the entire Chargers organization are 100 percent behind you in this. We'll do everything in our power to provide you with whatever support and tools you need to be successful. I know for a fact that our fans are 100 percent supportive of you, as well, in case you haven't noticed all the social media and whatnot.

"It's been about a week now and in this very short period of time, you've electrified this city and this fan base. Our fans deserve a day like this. I am so incredibly happy for them. I think I speak for everyone when I say we are all looking forward to this season and the seasons to come. Thank you.

"I would now like to introduce [President of Football Operations] John Spanos, President of Football Operations. He's the one that spearheaded our coaching search and GM search over the last three weeks. He's done an incredible job."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS PRESIDENT OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS JOHN SPANOS

"First off, thank you all for coming today. I know driving in the rain in Southern California can be a risky proposition, to say the least. I appreciate you all being here. This really is an exciting day. It's the culmination of a lot of hard work by a lot of people. Before I get going, there is one person that I just want to acknowledge in the crowd, our new General Manager Hortiz is here. He just got into town late last night. His press conference is going to be on Tuesday. I'm really looking forward to introducing Joe then. Joe, welcome to the Chargers family.

"Before I introduce our new head coach, I thought I'd talk a little bit about our process and what led us to [Head] Coach [Jim] Harbaugh. When we made a change at head coach and GM, before looking forward we thought it was really important to look back and reflect on where we were as an organization. What are some things that we had done well, but more importantly, what are the things that we need to do better? Where do we need to get better, especially as it related to the head coach search? We formed an internal search committee that was comprised of a very diverse cross-section of our organization. I want to thank each person that was on that search committee because, I have to tell you, we put in a lot of hours together. It was a lot of hard work, but it was important work.

"This was the most head coaches, I think, that we've ever interviewed in a search — at least that I've been a part of. We interviewed 15 in total. I think because successful coaches can come from all backgrounds, all resumes, all styles, it was just so important that we were really comprehensive in this search and that we put in the work. This was, probably, the deepest pool of head coach candidates of any search that I've been part of. I want to take a moment and thank each and every candidate that took the time to interview with us. It really was an incredible group. There were a lot of really deserving coaches. A number of them got head coaching jobs this year. I have a strong feeling that many more are going to get head coaching jobs in the years to come. I really enjoyed this process. We got to talk to some outstanding people, make some really great connections. We got to hear some really interesting insights. Even though it was a short time, I feel like I was able to forge some relationships that I know are going to last well beyond this hiring cycle. I'm really grateful for that. I just want to thank you again, all of the candidates that took the time to interview.

"We talked internally about really being willing to reimagine how we do things. That doesn't mean just doing things differently for the sake of change, but it means really being willing to explore all options, all possibilities and gaining an understanding of what it's going to take to get to the next level. One of the most important steps before we began the search is identifying what it is that we're looking for in a head coach. A lot of time was spent on that. We were able to identify specific traits in the category of leadership, specific traits of football acumen. Then, once you have those traits, there's really three things that you have to evaluate those traits in the candidates. You have the interview itself, you have the reference work that you do and then you have the body of work from the candidates. As we went through that process and as we completed that process, it became overwhelmingly clear that Coach Harbaugh was the man for this job.

"I'll start with the body of work because, really, Coach's body of work speaks for itself. So often, when you're going through this process and you're looking at the body of work of candidates, you're having to look at the job of a coordinator or position coach and you're trying to project how it's going to be as a head coach. That's fine. That's worked in a lot of businesses, but I've said it before and I'll say it again, I think that there's an added bonus when a candidate has head coaching experience. Of course, it's an even bigger bonus when that experience has yielded incredibly high-level success. Probably the biggest and most rare bonus of all, is when it's happened not once, not twice, not three times, but four times. In each of the four times when Coach Harbaugh arrived at his team, they were struggling. He was able to completely reverse their fortunes and turn them into winners, and of course, this past year, winning the ultimate prize in college football — a national championship.

"The second part that I mentioned is the reference work that we did. I want to take a moment here and thank all of the people that helped us in this process. I spent hours on the phone talking with external friends, colleagues and respected people in the league whose opinions I really value. Thank you to each and every person who helped us with that part. I was fortunate enough to speak with some people who have worked with Coach Harbaugh. I spoke with some players who played for Coach Harbaugh. As you'd expect, the feedback was just tremendous. One thing that became very clear about Coach — he is all about the team. He will do anything for his players and anything for his team. His drive, his commitment to winning is unparalleled. He just gets his team ready to play. He's able to instill a confidence and a competitiveness that's needed to win at this level. He brings out the best in his players. There are times where he leaves a long-lasting positive impression on his players. As one of his former players told me on the phone, 'John, he completely changed my career.'

"The last part of this whole thing, of course is the interview process, right? With Jim, from the very beginning in the interview process, I felt there was a very natural connection. A shared vision. Shared values. His ties to this team, they do run deep. Obviously, he played here. He knows a lot of people in the organization that are here who were here when he played. My interactions with Jim go way back. In the first interview, he was able to recall a conversation that we had nearly 20 years ago when I was on a college scouting trip and he was a college head coach. All of the traits that you hear about Jim, they just really presented themselves in the interview. His passion, his values of faith, family and football. The fact that what you see with Jim is what you get. He's very upfront, he's very honest. He told us the other day, 'Guys, I'm not a very good poker player. You're going to know how I feel.' I really appreciate that about you, Jim. You know, there was one point toward the end of the first interview, in reference to the energy and passion that Coach was exuding and my father [Owner and Chairman of the Board Dean Spanos] said, 'Coach, you have me so fired up right now that I'm going to have to go get a workout in when this interview is over.' I have yet to confirm if that workout actually happened or not, but what I promise you is given the look in my Dad's eyes, if he did, he attacked with an enthusiasm unknown to mankind.

"Coach, I just can't tell you how excited and happy we all are to have you and your whole family here today. Welcome home, Coach. With that, it's with great pleasure I introduce the next coach of the Los Angeles Chargers, Jim Harbaugh."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH JIM HARBAUGH

Opening Statement:

"Thank you very much. If I just had one word, it would be gratitude. For this opportunity, for the guidance that I've received. Gratitude to the Spanos Family — Susie, to [Owner and Chairman of the Board] Dean, to [President of Football Operations] John [and President of Business Operations A.G.]. [Co-Owner and Vice Chairman Michael] Mike [Spanos]. To the Ruhl family. Nicolas Ruhl, who I coached at Stanford, and Mikey [Spanos] who I coached at Stanford. Ana [Spanos], Phillip [Ruhl] — the entire family. To everybody in the Chargers organization for allowing me to have this opportunity. Gratitude. To the players, who have been great, our communications have been outstanding. I appreciate them welcoming me to the team. I believe we really share an important asset, which is being relentless. I see that in the players that we have on this football team and the Spanos family. Amazing.

"John [Spanos], that conversation that we had, I remember it well because in 2004 or 2005, I was coaching an all-star game in Las Vegas. After the practice, John came up to me and he said, 'You run a really good practice. That's a professional-type practice. I like the way you coach.' That was really only the second time that a professional coach, owner, general manager recognized that I might be pretty good. The first was [late Raiders Owner] Mr. Al Davis, who I have so much gratitude to. From that moment on, I knew you could recognize talent [*laughter*]. This was like a young Al Davis to me, so cool.

"Dean, when you said, 'We're hungry to win. I'm hungry to win.' I told you that and you said that you're starving and it just resonated with me so much. You're about it. You're grinding. You're one of the first in the building, I've been watching, and one of the last to leave. Through every single interview, you've been there. 28, 30-some straight days. Everybody has been great and so welcoming. I just like the way you do things. I like how you do it, what you do. [Executive Vice President of Football Administration/Player Finance] Ed [McGuire], [Chief of Staff] Fred [Maas], [Chief Administrative Officer] Catherine [B. Iste] and on and on, I could list so many. I'm just so excited. I think about, if I could describe it to you, it would be like Morgan Freeman in Shawshank Redemption. Red — I'm so excited that I can't sit still or hold a thought in my head, you know. What a free man would feel before a long journey. I just want to make it across the border. I want to shake my friend's hand — that's how I feel. I want to win. I want to win the right way. I want to treat people in a first-class way. Get really good at football and attack it each day, like John said. I'm attacking everything with an enthusiasm unknown to mankind.

"I want to especially thank my family, as well. My beautiful wife, Sarah, who does so much. Thank goodness for mothers. All that you do in supporting me, supporting our family. The best, just the best thing that has happened to me. You're the best, tremendous. My kids, I'm just so proud — a dad of seven. My son, Jay, who is a great man and great husband, father. He's a great football coach. Grateful for all the work he's done as a coach on our team at Michigan. My son, James, who is here. Gracie, who's not here, but both shining stars. My daughter, Addie, who is here today, she's 15. Katie, Katie bear. And Jack, Jack the quarterback [*laughter*] and my son, Johnny, who's here today. What's up, Johnny? You doing alright? I see you wearing the jersey, let's go! Let's go! [*laughter*] So much to talk about, just feeling good. Also, who I would not be here without is my parents, Jack Harbaugh and Jackie Harbaugh, my mom. Talking about moms, who was just the best. I did nothing to be born into that family. Just luck. My name should be lucky. How'd you get so lucky, lucky? That's how I feel. My parents, my brother John, my sister Joani — just such a blessing. Mom and Dad weren't able to make it here today, but hope to get them out here to Southern California soon. Dad, Mom, the kids really love living next door to their Papa and Yaiie. We'll see what we can get done there."

On arriving to Los Angeles:

"Thank you for that question, Jim [Hill]. You are a legend. We're in one of the great cities there is. One thing I know is Los Angeles, Southern California, they respect talent, effort and winning. It needs to be multiple. Multiple championships. We're going to be humble and hungry, but that's our goal. That's our goal, is to treat people in a first-class manner to win multiple championships. Day-by-day. Now, I'm quoting Jack Harbaugh, now. It's going to be one day at a time, one game at a time, one play at a time."

On changing the culture of the team:

"Another legend! Wow! Coming at me left and right with the legends. You're a legend."

"The team, the team, the team. It's going to be a team effort. There won't be any magic formulas. The only ones that I know are just good, old fashioned hard work and teamwork. That's the vision that I've received from the Spanos family. That's the guidance — this has to be done. This has to be done like a team and the great family that they are. Team, family — those are synonymous for each other. I have to quote Katie, my daughter, Katie Harbaugh because she came up with one of the best quotes I've ever heard — 'Work together. Win together.' The operating word there is together. Everything that we're going to do is going to be done as a team. Collaborative. Anything and everything that I can do as a coach for our players — it's about them. Those helpful warriors. Those mighty men so that they can be successful. I feel that's what my job is, to put them in a position to be successful. Then, the other operating word there is work. Nothing is ever achieved without work. Each day, just waking up and seeing how productive we can be, how much we can dominate the day. Talking about expectations, what are those expectations? Expectations are to have a great day today. To make it a great day. Some people say, 'Have a nice day.' That doesn't quite resonate with me. That leaves something to chance. Let's make it a great day. Let's have a great day if we want to. That's what we're doing. I'm happy to be here today. Again, I'm just thankful for this opportunity. I'm ready to attack it."

On the Chargers:

"The pros on this team — [QB] Justin Herbert, you see. It was well-said on that video. He's a crown-jewel in the National Football League. [S] Derwin James [Jr.], there's another one. Talk about somebody getting *me* fired up. I mean, let's go. Justin Herbert walks up on you, like [*laughter*]. Okay, alright! This is awesome. [WR] Keenan Allen. We have guys. [T] Rashawn Slater. Great to see him in the building, getting the work in. That's been the feedback I've been getting in the communication with the players — they want to work. They can't wait to work. They're ready to work. They want to win. Let's go. The weight room, we're getting it cleaned up right now. Getting it all set. We had a great day just yesterday. I mean, talk about fulfillment. Going in there to Home Depot and getting the Shop Vac. I feel like I'm back at USD. Let's get this thing right, let's get this thing good. When players come in here, then everything is organized and they're going to see that things are changing, things are different. We want to get to that center of player development, that weight room, and let's have at it. You hungry? You want to eat? This is an all-you-can-eat buffet right here. Let's get that work in. That's what the players have been saying back to me, 'Let's get it Coach.' Yeah, let's go."

On comfort with the Spanos Family from his playing days:

"Oh, absolutely. It got emotional. I mean, I started thinking about every job I've ever taken in coaching, there's a real emotional tie there. I feed off that. It's a game played by emotional people. It's coached by emotional people. There's a great level of emotion to it. I had the connection and I felt it."

"From the time I was first coaching at USD, I was there because of Monsignor Dillabough, Dan Dillabough, who was the Catholic Priest for the Chargers, took me over to USD and said, 'Want to go over and check out a USD basketball game?' I was like, 'Yeah, let's go. Great.' We were walking over to the Jenny Craig Pavilion there and looked over and said, 'What's that?' 'Well, that's our football stadium.' I was like, 'Let's go take a look at that.' Just looking in and being there, I said, 'Monsignor, some day I'm going to coach. I'm going to play as long as I can, then coach, then die. If you ever need a head football coach at USD, please, please call me.' I was coaching at the Raiders in my second season there as a quality control coach and got that call. Then, went and coached at USD. Funny story I'll tell you sometime about Mr. Davis and what he said to me when I was making that move, but that was a connection."

"Then, the next was Stanford. I go to Stanford to coach there. My Dad had been a defensive coordinator there. I went to Palo Alto High School as a junior and a senior. That was right. Going back to coach at Stanford. Then, the 49ers. It was just right up the road. All these friends that are 49ers fans. I'm grateful to [49ers Chief Executive Officer] Jed York, the York Family and the amount of incredible times that we had there. Then, when it was time to go, it was back to Michigan, which means so much to me. Where I went to college. Now, I'm going to the Chargers, where I played. The family. The family was just so sincere when I played — and this is from [late Owner] Alex Spanos, to Dean Spanos, to John Spanos, to A.G. This is a family. Faith, family and football. Those are my priorities. As Dean said, watching that video, the little hairs on my arm were standing up watching that. All of these old memories are flooding back. None more than the last game that I played with the Chargers, [Hall of Fame LB] Junior Seau and I exchanged jerseys. He signed it. I have that jersey hanging up in my home. Just so many things. As I just recounted all of those steps in the coaching profession, it's the relationships that I've cherished. I cherish relationships. I say that to my dear friends at Michigan, those that I've coached and worked with at the University of Michigan, those that I've coached and worked with and friends that I made when I was at the 49ers, at Stanford, at USD. Cherished relationships. Now, I'm excited for new ones. New and strong, trusting, lasting friendships. It drives me."

On 'why now and why the Chargers':

"The opportunity was presented and I felt that the Spanos family, the Chargers organization, they made it clear that they liked what I did and how I did it. That's all you can ever want from somebody that's employing you. I have a love of Michigan, but love the NFL. This opportunity, as my Dad would say, who's got it better than us? It was time. I know that I said this the other day, only have so many sands left in the hourglass and I want another shot, I want another shot to be simply known as World Champions. The Lombardi Trophy, that's my mission. Happy, and grateful, to have this opportunity. Already attacking, already a lot of work getting done. Just can't wait for, after this, we're going to go over to the facility, we're going to look at that. We can look at that. Maybe get some of the equipment ordered that we want. All that is just so exciting. Each day, right now, is just filled with fulfillment, of just chipping away, just chipping away at things. How can we make this to where we can put our players in the absolute best environment to be successful?"

On QB Justin Herbert and 'if there is an area of his game' that he is 'most eager to take to the next level':

"The thing that is just hitting me, as I'm watching his throws — I haven't been through them all yet, but I want to get to where I watch every one of his NFL throws, every one of his snaps. The thing that is just jumping out is this enormous talent. I'm waking up like real early in the morning these days going, 'I got to bring it, I got to bring my A game in every sense of the word.' I want to get a coaching staff put together and hired that is going to be worthy of coaching not only Justin [Herbert], but [S] Derwin [James Jr.] and all the guys. I really think that this is a talented group that's been assembled here. That's what's going to motivate it, that's what's going to drive it. I'm really thinking about my accountability and just making sure that I'm ready and the things that I tell him are going to be exact because I've looked at it and watched it. But, it's going to be a team effort, all the way. I'm excited about the challenge. Let's see if I'm man enough, a good enough coach, so that all of his hard work can be realized. I want to work really hard so that his hard work is going to be realized, Justin [Herbert] and every player on our football team."

On General Manager Joe Hortiz:

"I didn't get to meet every general manager that the organization interviewed, but it got down to [Giants Assistant General Manager] Brandon Brown and Joe Hortiz and I'm like, 'Wow, I'm blown away.' Great job of selecting these two men. Joe [Hortiz] is just fabulous. He has been with the Ravens the last 16 or 17 years. Nobody knows it better, nobody knows the talent better. He does a phenomenal job. He's earned it. He has really been given nothing, other than doing a tremendous job. Just so excited, Joe, to be partners with you. I've only been in the building, and on the Chargers, for the last six or seven days, but, man, I was getting lonely [*laughter*]. Now, I feel like I have a partner. Not only does he know the talent that across the league and in college football and on our team, but when you listen to him talk, he knows it cold. Just excited. He knows, potentially, some of our systems that we're going to put in on defense and on offense. It's a great fit. Earned. If you talk about Joe Hortiz, it's been earned. There's a tremendous track record there. I know that, for sure, because of my brother, John. I trust a lot of people in football, I really do, and their opinions and their recommendations. Not that I was making that decision, but nobody that I trust more than my brother. When my brother says somebody's good, and, 'You and Joe are going to get along great and you're going to be a great team.' I know it's going to be good and it's going to be dynamic."

On him 'interviewing the Chargers' during his interview process and 'resources':

"Me interviewing them? It was conversations, just football talk, football dialogue. It was great. It was flowing so much that it felt like I was finishing some of their sentences, they were finishing some of my sentences. The resources? We're about to go, after the press conference, over to the new facility. The proof is in the pudding there. Like Dean [Spanos] said, I was hungry to win, he's starving to win, let's go. I have no doubt that it's all about winning and winning the right way, and doing everything for this organization to apex. Like I said, I believe Dean and the Spanos family and myself share an important asset, which is relentless. I have a pretty good sense of the sincerity of that. These are sincere people. I take him at their word, and everything since has been, like I said, we're working toward it. I feel good about it."

On the 'state' of the University of Michigan football program:

"[J. Ira and Nicki Harris Family Head Football Coach] Sherrone [Moore] is the right man for the job. That's the guy, they got it right. We're a top-rated team, a top-five team. I still think of it as one, the Chargers and the Michigan Wolverines, like one team. In a great place. Much like when players leave the university to go on to the pros, there's a passing of the baton that takes place. You see [Michigan QB] J.J. [McCarthy] leave, but you see [Michigan QB] Jayden Denegal and [Michigan QB] Alex Orji. The next day, they're on that field, they're throwing with receivers. There's an excitement there. I've been involved in that, as a player, when the quarterback ahead of me left or graduated. It's the same for coaches. I've been talking to Sherrone, I mean, the guy is on fire right now. He's working, recruiting. Coaches like Jesse Minter, he's a tremendous coach. We're going through a process right now. Ben Herbert, I can confirm that he's going to be a Charger. I love the passing of the baton that was there, too, to Justin Tress — J-Tress. Hugged it out, right there on the blue M, right in the middle of the weight room. In great hands. Always going to be a loyal Wolverine."

On his tenure at Michigan:

"Michigan was great. Michigan, I have a great love for Michigan and a great love for the NFL. This opportunity, and challenge, I want it."

On his philosophy behind building a football team and the 'affirmation' from his brother, Ravens Head Coach John Harbaugh:

"I'm not going to let out-affirm me [*laughter*]. John Harbaugh is the best of the best. There is nobody better, in my opinion. It's great. We shared a room for 16 years growing up. We always lived in a house where John and I had the same room. Some competitions broke out from time to time. When I was six, my brother was maybe eight, we were living in Iowa City [Iowa] and my Dad came into the room to get us to quit talking so loud [*laughter*]. He said, 'You two brothers, who could possibly have it better than you two? To be able to share your hopes, your dreams, you can talk sports, talk your goals — who could have it better than you two?' Nobody, Dad. That's right. And he was right. We had that best friend relationship. Talking football, there's just nobody better, nobody like John Harbaugh. The way that he coaches, the proof is in the pudding. The way that he builds teams, the way that he treats people with a class and a grace. Much gratitude for his example that he set."

On 'expectations' in his first season as head coach:

"That's a great question. It has to start with being humble and hungry. Tight there. That's, where we are right now, humble and hungry. We're going to respect all of our opponents. We're going to strive, we're going to earn their respect and we're going to earn our winning as a tough team, a resilient team, a relentless team, a physical team. That is what we're going to aspire to be. Don't let the Powder Blues fool ya' [laughter]. That's what we're going to aspire to do."

On if any of the coaches from the previous staff will remain on the staff this upcoming season:

"We're working through that now. Thanks for that question. Just some amazing, amazing coaches. Several that you mentioned, there have been conversations with. It's a process. We're working through it, and we're working through it with Dean [Spanos], with Ed [McGuire], with John [Spanos]. They've been right there, hip-by-hip. Joe [Hortiz], we've been talking on the phone, but, now, he is in town. Just got in last night. That's priority number one right now, alongside getting to know the players. Getting this staff, putting this staff together. We want an all-star staff that's worthy to coach our players. That's what we're working on."

On if there is a 'timeline' that he would like the staff completed by:

"I'm going to be here every day working until that is done. Sarah [Harbaugh], I will probably come home for a couple of days, but not until that staff is hired and locked, cocked and ready to rock."

On the team and 'upcoming salary cap conversations':

"Amazing talent, amazing players on this team. Joe [Hortiz] just got in last night, so we're going to give him some time [laughter]. But, it's going to be a team effort. After we get the staff hired, then we're going to really start looking at the roster and evaluating that, getting ready for the Combine. That will be next on the agenda, too. Then, free agency, when that opens. Then, getting our systems in. We have to get our systems in — offensively, defensively, special teams. Then, get prepared for installs, Phase One, Phase Two, Phase Three. The great news is that there is a lot of work to be done. It's going to fill the days. They're going to fly by. That's what we're going to do; attempt to dominate each day and be as productive as possible."

On 'the biggest priority':

"Get the staff hired, that's the biggest priority right now."

On his conversations with players currently on the roster:

"They've been incredible. What they've been like is they've been incredible. To a man, just appreciate them, too, for getting back to me. They have busy lives. Some guys are on vacations, some guys are with their family. [T]rey Pipkins [III], I got to meet him in the airport — he has three great, big kids. His wife and his Dad, too. 'Just ready to go, Coach, ready to go. Ready to get to work. Happy that you're here.' Then, he had to get his kids through the security [laughter]. Other conversations have been just as incredible. The theme is that these guys are ready to work. The guys are very hungry to win."

On if he is 'an L.A. guy':

"Am I an L.A. guy? Yeah, I think so [laughter]. And I aspire to be. The Midwest in where I grew up — Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky. Then, we moved to California for my junior and senior year of high school. Then, I went back to Michigan for college. I told a lot of the folks when I was at the Rose Bowl, I grew up watching the Rose Bowl on New Years Day. Laying on your stomach, hands under your chin, elbows on the floor, looking at palm trees and mountains and sun, ocean — 'Wow, I want to be there some day.' My favorite show growing up is the Rockford Files [laughter]. It's still my favorite show. Ted Lasso has now tied the Rockford Files [laughter]. That was me as a kid. Driving that Camaro around L.A. and the car chases. Down there by the beach, have the trailer down there at the beach. I told my wife this — should I tell them? [Laughter] I want to drive my RV out here and go to a trailer park, like down by the water or by Disneyland. There are two that I've researched that are close to the facility. I want to Jim Rockford it for the next couple of months until we move into the new facility [laughter]. I have that thought going through my head [laughter].""

On the 'challenge' of NIL in college athletics:

"I don't look at the obstacles. Every job, maybe, has its downside or challenge, or adversity. No, I have no complaint. The people that complain, that's a common plain, they want you to agree with them. I have no complaints. I love football, love coaching. Faith, family, football. This opportunity, I just have tremendous gratitude for."

On facing his brother, Ravens Head Coach John Harbaugh, in the upcoming 2024 regular season:

"We haven't really talked about that. We know that we play each other next year and we know that we play them here. The competitive nature, I don't know what percentage it was — I bet it's 85 percent [*laughter*] — we were competing as teammates, on the same team, whether it was hockey, baseball, football, choosing up sides on the playground, we were mostly on the same team. There were times where we had some scrimmages in the backyard, or one-on-one, and that kind of nature, and, yeah, it was competitive. He's a competitor. He is a great competitor. He is as tough as you could want to be. Tough as a two-dollar steak is what comes to mind [*laughter*]. But, he pulls it out of you. He pulls it out of anybody he competes against. He pulled it out of me. You have to rise up, it demands that you give it your best. That is what is going to be in this situation again. I look forward to that. He is going to bring out the best in me. Let's have at it."

On 'potentially appearing in Hollywood movies' and his message to the fans:

"Maybe we can talk about that some other time, but that would be cool [*laughter*]. I report to the Spanos family, to ownership, but I also feel like I report to the fans. I feel like I report to the players. I'm accountable to all of those in the organization, to the other coaches. We're going to work at it. That's the mission, that's the goal. We stated the goal. I'm not going to be shy about stating that. That's what we want to do, we want to we want to be known as World Champions, and we're going to do it or die trying. That's what we're going to do. We're going to get as good at football as we can, that's our goal. As I said before, we're going to aspire to be a team that Vince Lombardi could be proud of — blocking, tackling, toughness, playing smart, playing fast, playing physical. Those are still very important. I know a lot has changed since I was in the NFL, my last year was 2014. One thing I'm pretty sure hasn't changed is that you have to win. That's what we're attacking."

On his message to the players that he 'hasn't spoken to yet':

"Through text or talk, I've pretty much spoken to just about all of them, almost all of them. It's been really taking their message. The consistent thing is that they are ready to get to work and they want to win. Work together, win together, Katie Harbaugh. It really came flowing back to mind. That's been quite a bit of the dialogue. Just can't wait to see it. Do what you have to do right now, spending that time with family is really important. That reset, get away from football a little bit, but I can already tell that they're thinking about it. I can't wait to see them. When we do, we'll be getting after it. In the meantime, ownership, personnel, coaching, it's coming together, and we're working. That's what we want to do. We just want to work really hard to make sure that their hard work is realized."

On 'building an all-Chargers crowd':

"My thought is pretty much what I said earlier — by your talent and by your effort, you will be known, and winning. Our team, when people look at it, that's the vision that they're going to see, that kind of football team."

On if recently coaching at the collegiate level 'presents an advantage in talent evaluation':

"I think it is an advantage. There are just so many, all the players this year that played for us at Michigan, but I recruited a lot of the other ones, too, through the years, and watching them. I think it's going to be [an advantage]. I don't know how much, I don't have the scientific percentage on that, but I think it does help."

On 'belief in a quick turnaround':

"That you get things done in like six to nine months. The military, how they put together a battalion, that takes them about six to nine months, that resonates with me. But the other one comes from my Dad, better today than yesterday, better tomorrow than today. That being the expectation, that being the goal, to be productive. Let's go to work. When the head hits the pillows, sore muscles, you're sweated, you've worked, you really used your mind to the point where you just have to shut it off. As soon as the head hits the pillow, you can fall right to sleep. That's knowing that you had a productive day."

On his 'vision' for the offense, specifically pertaining to QB Justin Herbert:

"First of all, the quarterback that we have, protect him. Protect his environment. On the field, protect him. Also, beef up the run game and play-action pass and the drop back game, we're going to try to get as great as we can. I think that we can be extraordinary there with the receivers we have and the quarterback. Also, the running game, work just as hard at that and get to be a balanced type of a football team. Always protect the football. That's where it starts. Sometimes I tell other players that it's not that I love the quarterback more than anybody else on the team, I love all the players on the team like beloved sons, but the quarterback, he does touch the ball every single play. That person is somebody that we have to protect. I love the line, too. There's no other position group on the entire team that they don't rely on any other position to be good, but every other position relies on them to be successful. Then, the pass catchers, who also need to be really good blockers for us to have a good run game. Defense, if they don't score, they don't win. Put a defense out there that is aggressive, hard to score them, have to get turnovers, and then win a couple of games in the special teams. Also, protect the football, set the tone, be the tone setters with the special teams. First plays of the game are special teams plays. All that to say, really, the team, the team, the team. Not so much offense, defense and special teams, we-fense with the entire football team."

On the factors that 'go into' deciding on an offensive coordinator:

"For an offensive coordinator, what kind of offense do you want? What kind of offense do you envision? What kind of unit do you envision? Then, next is really tell me about the offensive line, go through that position. That's where it starts. Hear that the vision is the same, that the offense is not going to turn the ball over, but is going to be able to drive, put points on the board and be physical, especially up front. A team that is tough, can block, can tackle, block on offense. We want to be balanced, run game and pass game. Have to protect the quarterback. There's a tone there. There's an example set from the coordinator that it's unselfish. The same that we want from the players, we want from our offensive coordinator, not about stats, it's about our team winning."

On 'disconnect in San Francisco' and his relationship with Hortiz and his personnel staff here:

"Don't believe everything you read [*laughter*]. I remember in the sixth grade, my English teacher came in and presented this concept called critical reading. I wonder how many people would really even know what the definition of that is? That was an awesome time in San Francisco. Now, here, my relationship with the GM, I really want to be Robin to his Batman in the offseason, then when it turns around to the season, I'll be Batman and he'll be he'll be Robin. We'll be the caped crusaders, man [*laughter*]."

On if Jesse Minter and Jay Harbaugh 'will join the staff':

"Going through the process right now. The timeline, we just have to get it right you. John [Spanos] said it, and I respect the way they went about that process, there are so many good coaches out there. Nobody I respect more than Jesse [Minter], he's phenomenal, a shining star. As a coach, I've been with him. I want to talk to as many people as I can before we make the final hires. But, it would be up to be tremendous. I think that Jay [Harbaugh] is a great coach, a great coach. A shining star, as well. We'll let you know. Haven't made the final decisions on the staff yet."

On relating to Ted Lasso:

"There are some things that I've copied from Ted Lasso. I try to emulate Ted Lasso in a lot of ways. That TV show, that is one of the best. Jason Sudeikis, I have a great story of how I met Jason Sudeikis, but I think that there's a life lesson in every one of those episodes. If you haven't seen that show — a piece of advice, if I may [*laughter*] — watch the Ted Lasso show."