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Chargers Week 5 Media Availability

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OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR JOE LOMBARDI

On what 'jumped out' about OL Jamaree Salyer's performance against the Texans:

"How calm he was. Kind of what we anticipated that this wasn't going to be a big deal to him as much as you would think a rookie having to step in at left tackle for his first start. I thought he played well. I think we had high expectations for him in that game and he met them."

On 'what needs to happen' to improve the run game:

"I think we probably have to come up with better plays and execute them better. I think we had some important runs in that game. The way it felt during the game, I was a little surprised at the final stats because we had some bigger runs. Obviously, taking four knees at the end of the game kind of adds to the lack of yards per carry. I think we've been saying it all year, just more consistency."

On adding consistency:

"I think it's everybody. I think it's me calling the plays and everyone just executing better. I wish it were easy that you could just point to one thing, but as usual in these things, it's everyone kind of pulling a little harder to get the thing going in the right direction."

On if he's pleased with the production of the running backs:

"At times. We had a third-and-two that they defended really well. It wasn't a big gain, but we converted, too, on the run, it was a really great run. That was a positive, and then there were other times where we were just a step out of a shoelace tackle and we got a big gain. I said at times, and I think that goes back to consistency."

On RB Joshua Kelley receiving four snaps in the second half:

"I think it was just the way the calls came and who was in the game. It was nothing against Josh or anything. I think it was just the way it was getting substituted and the way the calls fell."

On if Kelley can receive more snaps if 'he gets going':

"I think we should. I think it's a good point."

On TE Donald Parham Jr.:

"I think he's a guy that's a pretty important weapon to us when he's rolling. I think he feels good right now. We're not going to overload his assignments on his first game back, but certainly someone that we're planning to work in when he's ready to go. I think he'll be an important add for us."

On Parham's recovery from his injury last year:

"He was having a really good camp, but he had that hamstring injury, which turned out to be pretty significant and kept him out for a number of weeks. Real positive up to the injury and then he was working back into practice last week and looked pretty good, but we wanted to give him another week. Not as big of a sample size as you would wish because he hasn't been healthy for a long time. From what we've seen, he looks like he's back to normal."

On offensive struggles in the third quarter:

"I don't know if there is a common thread. I think this last week — and really, we had a decent run. We had a screen that should have been a big play that we didn't quite execute as well. We had it all set up. You're not going to get a better look. I think we had a drop on third down. Again, I don't think there is a common thread per se, but I bet you by Week 9, we're going to say things have averaged out. That's what you hope. It's something we're emphasizing, that, 'Hey, we have to come out of the half a little more ready to go.' It's something we certainly have recognized as being an issue and we're working to fix it."

On G Matt Feiler:

"Certainly, the first couple of games, I think there are some snaps that he knows he can do better. I thought he played well this last game. I think if you asked [RB] Austin [Ekeler] on that, he could have set that block up a little better. I'm not going to put that particular rep on him. To your point, the first couple of games I think he knows that he can play better. Satisfied with his performance this last Sunday. He's a veteran. I think he's going to be just fine."

On TE Gerald Everett:

"He's made some really big plays for us. He's a fighter in the run game. Kind of a guy that we trust in both phases. I've been really pleased with how he has performed as a receiver. He's got fantastic hands. He's made some great catches. He had the one drop, but that's just a concentration thing. I'm excited about where he is and where he can go in this offense."

On what he learned about the Browns from last year's game:

"I think it starts with their defensive ends. They are a significant problem. I kind of envy the Falcons that they didn't have to play either of them last week. I'm not expecting that we're going to get so lucky. I think it starts with them. They are really game-wreckers, both of them. They are fast at linebacker. They really run to the ball, hard to catch if you're trying to catch them, getting to the second level, aggressive at corner, physical safeties. I think it's a team that's got good team speed, great pass rushers and they're a team that can create chaos for you. They are a good squad."

On the bootleg play calls in the fourth quarter:

"I think the first one was a short-yardage play that — you're never 100 percent sure of what a defense is going to do, so you're playing their tendencies. You're giving them a formation that's selling a certain play that you're counting on creating an aggressive response from them. You're kind of hiding the half back getting out in the flat in the first one. Obviously, it worked. The second one was a second-and-longer play. We're kind of in this, 'Hey, we're trying to run the clock down a little bit and not score too early.' And so you're hoping that you get a similar response. They weren't quite as aggressive, but they still lost him [Austin Ekeler] in the flat. The second call was a little bit out of sequence, meaning that was more of a tight red zone, inside the 10 call where we were expecting to be a little more aggressive. Got lucky and called it and it worked."

On if the second bootleg 'was a response' to how the Texans defense played the first bootleg:

"They are two different situations. The first one, we were very confident on. The thing is, I do know that when you get [QB] Justin [Herbert] on the perimeter of the defense, nothing bad happens. It felt that at worst case, that was going to be a completion to him for four or five yards. Luckily, we got more than that. It worked out."

On QB Justin Herbert's progression with his injury:

"He's confident. I think, going into that Jacksonville game, there was just a lot of uncertainty. After that game, I think we kind of knew where we were. I think he's feeling better every week. It's certainly something that you're monitoring, but it's not the big issue that you felt it was a couple of weeks ago."

On how Herbert's injury affects him as a play caller:

"I think you know what you are dealing with. You know how he feels. I don't think there are a ton of limitations. Again, I felt like — the Jacksonville game, I felt maybe more uncertainty than there needed to be. Hindsight is always 20/20, but I think he was ready to go and maybe we were a little conservative with him. Now you know where he is at and you can call a game a little more normal."

On the pass protection from the offensive line:

“For as much as we’ve thrown, it’s been really good. Those guys have battled and protected Justin [Herbert]. I think it’s a team effort. The offensive line has been blocking well for the most part. We can all pick a play or two where things aren’t perfect, but we can say that about 32 teams, I think. The tight ends and running backs, either helping out with the ends or picking up the blitzes, receivers getting open, and then Justin having the clock in his head. He’s not a guy that holds the ball when it’s not appropriate. I think it’s been a team effort with all of those guys.”

On T Trey Pipkins III:

“I don’t know if he has exceeded [expectations], but he’s been playing really well. Last offseason as we were getting into the draft and you just went back and re-evaluated what he did when he played tackle and you looked and you said, ‘You know what? It was pretty good.’ Maybe you have these memories of what training camp was like, but when he had a chance to go in and play — and you even look back at the preseason snaps, I think we probably had an opinion of him that wasn’t fair. We kind of made a decision that we’re going to give this guy every chance to win that job and had pretty high expectations after really sitting down and just iso-ing his reps at tackle in preseason in those two games. I think we had high expectations, but you never know. I think he’s met them.”

On if he is ‘satisfied’ with the performance of Pipkins and G Zion Johnson in the run game:

“I think satisfied is a strong word. We’re always looking to get better. I think, like you said, they are on the right track. We said it before, that position, you can evaluate each individual, but how they work together with the guys next to them. That’s something that takes time and I think the more they play, the better that will get.”

On Herbert’s performances in road games:

“I just think he is a very mentally strong guy that doesn’t let all of the outside noise get to him. We have to treat home like the road a lot with our cadence. We get a lot of practice on that stuff and he handles it well. I think for his age and experience level, he does a good job handling all of the silent cadences and communicating with guys in a loud environment. I can’t say that I’ve got in my mind the difference between him at home or on the road, but, obviously, he does well on the road. It’s been good.”

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR RENALDO HILL

On Browns RB Nick Chubb:

“Obviously, you notice that he is put together. I think everybody has seen his YouTube [weight-lifting] videos [laughter]. That’s how he runs; he’s a strong runner, and he runs behind his pads. You can’t tackle him high, and most people usually slip down to his legs, anyway. He’s a guy that can break tackles and he can finish, he can finish on the long runs. We have our hands full with both of those backs over there. It’s going to take a team effort. We have to do a great job of leveraging the ball at all levels.”

On the value of ‘group tackling’ when defending against the Browns’ run game:

“I think that we have to do a good job of creating levels, too. A lot of times, you see those big runs, you see that everybody is stacked at one level, and when he breaks that level, he’s off to the races. We have to make sure that we do a good job from the front end to the linebackers stacked back behind him, and then make sure that we keep a triangle on the ball on the back end. Some of those balls that they do pop, we’re hoping that we can get it down for eight yards and not let it be a home run.”

On the edge group’s performance opposite of OLB Khalil Mack:

“I think that they’ve done a good job. The combination of [OLB] Chris [Rumph II] and [LB] Kyle [Van Noy] over there, and having [OLB Derrek] Tuszka up to spell those guys, as well. I think that [Outside Linebackers Coach] Giff [Smith] did a good job of making sure that he got those guys in their right spots, making sure that when [Derrek] Tuszka went in there, it wasn’t anything that was too complicated from a guy who just came into our program. Obviously, he knows the scheme from being in it in the past, but when you’re switching defenses, a lot can happen. I thought that Giff [Smith] did a good job of making sure that he gave those guys the right defensive calls when they were out there so that they could go out and operate at a high level.”

On CB J.C. Jackson:

“J.C. has been doing well. I like how he has been competing. You feel his presence on the backside over there. You feel his size. I know that he’s not big in stature, but he’s put together. He makes it tough for guys to get around him.”

On if Jackson ‘is at 100 percent’:

“I definitely don’t think he’s at 100 percent, but I’ll take 80 percent of J.C. Jackson any day. He commands that. He’s only going to continue to get better as he gets more comfortable in the scheme and he gets more help there.”

On preparing for Browns Head Coach Kevin Stefanski’s ‘varied run scheme’:

“It’s tough. We have to follow the rules within our scheme because they’re multiple; they’re not one thing. When you get runs on the outside, the next thing you know, they’re focusing on run duos up in inside. We just have to be structured within our scheme, making sure that we’re not giving our guys too much this week and making sure that we hit all of the run fits out in the walk-through so that they know exactly where everyone is going to be. We try to focus on more of the run game and the run fits, making sure that we drew it up and hit it in the meetings so that those guys know exactly where we’re at. The menu is not huge from that aspect, but we expect to be effective in what we do.”

On S Nasir Adderley’s ‘area of improvement’:

“The biggest thing that I don’t want him to do is to continue to press. I know that he’s a guy who is prideful. When he comes in, he’s prepared. I look at his notes every day. I think he’s, maybe, trying to do the extra. I think he just really needs to focus on his job and responsibility. He’s a prideful guy. He’s going to keep coming to work. He’s going to keep getting better. He’s not where he wants it, and it’s not where we want it, but I know that he is going to keep coming to work and making sure that he gets better at his craft.”

On Adderley 'jumping short crossing routes' and where he can improve in coverage:

"I think it's, maybe, a little bit of the mental. Not that he doesn't know the defense or anything, but when you're in there and the game is going, sometimes you need some extra people communicating to help you stay on course. We've all done it, as players, where you just need a little nudge from here or there. He's doing a lot of the quarterbacking back there. Sometimes, you hate for that to happen on the deep passes, but, it happens. He'll keep cleaning that part of his game up, but I think that he's pressing a little bit and isn't seeing the full picture. He just has to make sure that he's focused on his job first, then being able to distribute everybody else's responsibilities out."

On DL Sebastian Joseph-Day's performance thus far this season:

"We talk about big guys being able to make tackles up front, not just sticking on blocks, that's where Sebastian [Joseph-Day] has been. He's been disruptive in beating blocks, but also, creating the negative place for us. When you have a guy up front that is doing both, I think that's something that you really look for, when you're in the free agent process, somebody to have up front, where a guy can be disruptive and make tackles. Not just being disruptive and sending the tackle back to somebody else, but be able to make those tackles."

On Joseph-Day's personality:

"He's a leader. He's vibrant. Every time that he is out at practice, I feel his presence when he's out there, and I hear him [laughter]. He gives you a lot from the front perspective, but he also gives you a lot as a leader on his defense."

On smiling when talking about Joseph-Day:

"Because you feel Sebastian [Joseph-Day]. You know that it's going to be a good day once you see him. He's always upbeat. I could probably come in here, maybe off of four hours of sleep, but when I see his face, and he's saying, 'What's up, coach?' When he's laughing and smiling, everything is good in the world."

On if Joseph-Day's positive attitude is contagious:

"It definitely is. We all think about our problems, or I may be thinking about what we need to do for these guys today, and sometimes you see that smile, and that just may be enough. These guys come in here ready to work every day with a smile on their face, and it gets me going. If I'm off of a few hours of sleep, I can shake that right off. If Sebastian [Joseph-Day] is ready to roll, I'm ready to roll."

On if DL Christian Covington being activated last week 'was a gameplan thing':

"It was definitely game-specific there. We definitely wanted to take advantage of that situation. We're looking for the matchups and we thought that that was a great matchup last week, and it's definitely part of the matchup some this week. We haven't decided on Covington or [DL] Ojito [Ogbonnia] just yet."

On Browns WR Amari Cooper:

"He's always been a talented guy. He's a multi-cut route-runner. He can get in and out of breaks. I think that he does a good job with his pace. He can start slow, then pick up speed. He has good size. What he doesn't get credit for is that he shows up in the run game, as well. He has good size on the perimeter, as far as running the ball, along with [Browns WR Donovan] Peoples-Jones. That's something that he doesn't get credit for. He's as crafty as they get on outside lanes. It will be a good matchup for our guys on the back end."

On what CB Bryce Callahan adds to the defense:

"I think that Bryce [Callahan] adds calmness. Like I said, he grew up in this system. He knows where all of the potholes are at. I just think that he gives those guys some calmness. When you have a second-year player like [CB] Asante [Samuel Jr.], who is on the rise, but still needs those tips here and there, you know that you have Bryce [Callahan] there to calm everybody down. 'Hey, here's what is about to happen, anticipate this.' I just think that it gives everybody around us a calmness."

On 'coaching a defender getting run into by a receiver':

"We try to go a good job of making sure that we monitor us, as far as us being on different levels, making sure that we're not all at the same level. That's a recipe to get picked. Sometimes, it's going to happen like that in the game. They may miss the call. We have to continue to push through and try to finish the play, and hopefully, we have some guys on the back end who see it and can save a life. Sometimes, it's part of the game. We try to do a good job of managing our different levels and having a number system of where guys will align."

On LB Drue Tranquill's impact on the defense:

"Drue [Tranquill] has been steady. Every practice, I feel like he's gaining more and more confidence, along with [LB] Kenneth Murray [Jr.]. I think that the combination of having both of them out there for this amount of time — there have been spurts where you have Drue [Tranquill] at one point, Kenneth [Murray Jr.] at one — but they've been healthy. I wish that I had some wood to knock on [laughter]. They've been good with that. I think that it just helps them build confidence. I think the more reps that you get at that position, and the more and more they see how people are trying to attack them, and knowing the defense, being in Year 2, I just think that it is gaining those guys more and more confidence. They're playing fast. They're playing lights out. They're making all of the adjustments fast and quick, and that's what you want those guys behind the ball to do."