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LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH ANTHONY LYNN

Opening statement:

"I thought was a good professional practice today. There was no fighting — three claps. We talked about what we wanted to get done today. We were going up against a good football team. Those guys came over and played hard. There was a lot of energy on the field. I feel like we got better today. They play at a faster tempo than what we're used to seeing in practice. That's going to get us right for games. That showed up a little bit, the conditioning. It was a good, clean practice. There were a lot of plays, back-and-forth. There are some things that we need to correct, some penalties in end-of-game situations. Those are the kind of things — I believe, you put them in those situations right now in practice that young players will learn from that and help us down the road. It was a good practice today."

On the offensive line:

"The offensive line held its own. They had some sacks, we had some sacks. We went back-and-forth on that. The young offensive line, I thought they stepped up. There was maybe one too many penalties, too many holding [calls] today. Other than that, I thought they protected fine."

On T Trent Scott:

"Trent is growing like a weed. He's getting better every day. Unfortunately, you have to go through some things to get better. He's going through some things now. I thought today was good for him."

On the joint practice:

"It brings a little more energy. We get tired of going against each other, actually. When we get some new blood in here, it brings a little more energy. When you get more energy, you get more focus and hopefully, more production."

On DT Jerry Tillery:

"Tillery, he is going through our individual [drills] right now. We're bringing him along slowly. He will get more full-speed reps next week. I can't wait to see him out there full-speed."

On RB Melvin Gordon III:

"I have no idea. Melvin and I, I think we talked last week. This is the first I've heard of Melvin asking for a trade."

On the running backs:

"Well today, we have five other running backs working today. They're working hard. [Justin] JJ [Jackson] is doing a good job. Austin [Ekeler] had a couple of nice runs today. Jeremy [Cox] is coming along well being a rookie and all. He's playing both positions — [running back and fullback]. I'm really happy with the development with some of those young guys right now."

On Rams RB Todd Gurley:

"You know what, I didn't get a chance to see him today, but I'll see him on Saturday. I knew Todd back when he was at Georgia. We talked a lot when he was coming out. I like Todd a lot. He's a classy, young man and a very talented running back."

On playing starters in the preseason:

"I didn't know that I was undecided [on a plan]. We definitely have a plan for our starters in preseason. I'm going to give everybody what they need to get ready. Some guys may not get as much."



On what he was looking to get out of joint practice:

"Well, we're getting guys game-ready and going up against the tempo offense like we did today. Like I've said, going up against a different opponent — I think it brings the energy up a little higher. It starts getting you ready for Week 1."

On external expectations of the team:

"To me, it's no different than what it was last year. We wanted to win the Super Bowl last year. That's our expectation every single year. The pressure, we apply that to ourselves. No one has higher expectations than we have for ourselves — our organization, our players and coaches."

On the offensive line without T Russell Okung:

"Well, Russell makes us a better offensive line for sure, but like I said earlier, I like the way the young guys are developing. They're coming along. There are some things that we can do once we get into the games to help the young guys that we're not doing right now. Right now, we want to see them struggle a little bit and get better."

On Okung:

"Well, his situation, it is what it is. We'll do a re-check at the end of the month and see where he is."

On young players that stood out:

"I was back-and-forth a lot on both fields, watching offense, defense and special teams. Yeah, there were some young guys [that stood out]. You know, [WR] Artavis [Scott] has had a solid camp. Some of those young backs, they're starting to get the hang of it. I like some of those young linebackers. [LB] Drue [Tranquill] is doing a heck of a job. There were some guys here and there. There are guys that are doing their job and I expect them to do their job. It's the guys that I don't know that I'm watching the most."

On WR Mike Williams:

"Mike is our starter. He's a heck of a receiver. He had a good season last year. We expect him to pick up where he left off. That's only going to happen if he keeps working at it like he's doing every single day now."

On Williams' performance against the Rams:

"I don't think too much about last year because last year is in the past. My focus is forward. I thought Mike had a good practice today."

On TE Hunter Henry:

"He's 100 percent. He's back. He looks like Hunter Henry to me."

On who stood out at practice:

"I really can't say until I go back and watch the tape. I have to watch all of the tape before I can say that someone really stood out."

On Jackson's pass-catching ability:

"He's always had good hands. Coming out of Northwestern, he had good hands. I used him last year on the scout team as a wide receiver some days just to develop his skillset. [Wide Receivers Coach] Phil [McGeoghan] has done a good job with him when [Jackson] has gone over and worked with the receivers. He's a good receiver. He's a guy that we can use out of the backfield, for sure."

On his relationship with Rams Head Coach Sean McVay:

"Sean is not new to me. I have known Sean all of his life, even before football. You know, I played for his grandfather. He was always around, so I've known him forever. We get together, we organized [practice] and we talk these things through. I thought today went really smoothly because of that."



LOS ANGELES CHARGERS RUNNING BACK AUSTIN EKELER

On what he wants to improve on this season:

"I think as a running back, it comes down to your body specifically because nothing is black and white as a running back. It could be the same play, but it might be run 10 different ways because of 10 different scenarios. Preparing, coming in, it's like, 'Can I make the cut? Am I strong? Am I fast?' That's what I have been working on."

On his second season:

"It's night-and-day different, man. I've been helping out these rookies because I know what they are going through, but what's helped a lot is that we have the same offensive coordinator and head coach. The culture has stayed the same and offense has stayed the same. Being in the offense and around [Offensive Coordinator Ken] Whiz [Whisenhunt], you start to create a relationship, get that trust factor so it helps you and it helps him understand what you can do and what you can't do. For these young guys coming in, I'm looking at them and — my head was spinning when I was a rookie. I remember being sixth string, I've been there. I'm trying to help them just catch up and say, 'It's just a learning process and all you can do is keep studying and keep studying.' Now I feel comfortable. I'm actually the one teaching now and I'm not the rookie on the other hand who is getting taught. I'm just passing down the knowledge, trying to help these guys make the best out of their opportunity."

On RB Melvin Gordon III:

"I haven't [had much interaction with him]. We just wish he was here. I know there is obviously a business side, but that's about it."

On extra reps:

"Yeah, extra reps are always going to help whatever you're doing, it doesn't matter. The more you practice, the better you can see yourself and understand what you need to work on."

On the number of extra reps he's getting:

"I wouldn't necessarily say it's more reps. It's more with the first-team though. The difference is it's a different group. Even with the second team, I guess, that it's still the same plays, the same reads, nothing's different. It's just the personnel in the game. We have six running backs, I think, right now so we're still on a good rotation."

On joint practices:

"Finally getting to hit someone else, that's what I was excited for today. We've just been beating each other up through OTAs and mini camp, so it's finally good to finally see someone else in a different jersey and see some different players. With our defense, we recognize pretty much everything, so now I actually have to scan and get back to my game mentality as far as the mental part of it."

On the intensity of practice:

"I remember two years ago at the Rams, at their place, the intensity level got pretty high, but today was pretty mellow. Those are the things that start to snowball. Today was chill and today was just like a normal practice. It was great. It's great when it's like that because then both teams can have fun. We understand that for both, it's training camp, so there are going to be a lot of mistakes and things like that, but we still can get excited and not be fighting one another."

On Head Coach Anthony Lynn:

"We call him the guru when it comes to running backs because when he comes into the room, you're going to learn something new every single time. Like you said, he coached running backs, he was a coach for, I think, like 20 years. You become pretty familiar with something when you do it for 20 years. He will tell us a read, or say 'Hey, you should've seen this,' and you start writing it down and think you wouldn't have even thought of it like that. Every time he is coming over and spitting knowledge at us, everyone's ears perch, 'What's he going to say?' That's just how he carries his business with us as well. When he comes in the room, it's business. [We ask,] 'What you got?' [He says,] 'This is what I've got for you,'."

On the goal line drill from practice:

"The jump drill — we do that once every year. Who can get five bags? That's what it comes down to. Shoot, you know. This year, [RB Justin] JJ [Jackson] and I actually ended up getting it. They didn't get his on film but we both got it. Coach Lynn was telling us that [Hall of Fame RB LaDainian] LT [Tomlinson] was the only other one that he had that got that. He got it when he was in year 10, which is super impressive. Year 10 and still getting over five bags, but yeah, it's just a fun thing we do every year."



On if he'd completed the drill before:

"Yeah. No one's every gotten five — we've always gotten four."

On Los Angeles having two NFL teams:

"I think as a player, you have to kind of put the blinders on as far as the outside of what's going on in your area. Especially right now, you should just mainly focus on yourself, your team, your spot, your position, how you can fit and how you can increase your role on the team. I mean, when it comes to outside factors, there's really not anything that's affecting us, especially me right now. I think I learned that early on as a rookie when I really got caught up in the social media. That's when everything was blowing up for me, right. Going from a kid from a small town that just made the team. I learned at an early age that, look, you have to put social media to the side because you get too caught up in it. You can't read the comments, can't do anything like that. You have a bad game? You're going to hear about it. You just can't get in your head. You have to stay focused because it is a short period of time. I know it's a six-month season, seven months if you make it to the Super Bowl, right? It is a short period of time and if you slip up, your moment can be gone."

On Gordon:

"I mean, even if he was here, we have the same mentality. We wish he was here — shoot, he'd help our team — you know, he's a Pro Bowl running back. Any Pro Bowler is going to help a team. If he's here, we still have to move forward. If he's not here, we still have to move forward."

On dynamic between him and RB Justin Jackson:

"Justin, he's a creative runner, man. He's a unique runner. There aren't many people I've seen, in general, that run like he does. Like I tell him, he's got the razzle-dazzle, some hocus-pocus — I make up all these different things. That's how he runs, that's how I'd describe his runs because you really don't know what he's going to do. I try to emulate some of his running and it's just so unique to how he's done it and his style. I think that's great for even like when [Melvin] Mel [Gordon] is here — we're all three here. There's three different styles. We all complement each other. It kind of keeps this defense on guard a little bit because we do rotate so much and get so many different looks."

On playing with QB Philip Rivers:

"It's amazing, man. It just takes a lot off your shoulders because he puts us in the right situation to succeed at our job. Even if you know what you're doing as a running back in the backfield, he'd tell you, 'Hey you got these guys and got this guy.' It's just reassuring, in my mind, like, 'Okay, I got you.' Shoot, like I said before — he's been here longer than any of the coaches, man. He knows it. He's a chief out there, he's getting everyone in the right spot making sure everyone's doing well."

On TE Hunter Henry:

"You know, the more factors you can have that can really change a game, the better you're going to be. You can throw more at a defense and keep them spread out. So having Hunter, having all the weapons that we do on offense, defense and special teams, as well just really makes us a well-balanced team."

On what Henry brings to the offense:

"He's a double-threat, you know. He can block and he's good at routes down the field, too. He can make contested catches and makes plays — he's a play-maker. He's like any other play-maker, [defenses] are going to have to scheme for him. When you can bring attention to him, it brings it off somewhere else."



LOS ANGELES CHARGERS RUNNING BACK JUSTIN JACKSON

On his improvement catching passes:

"It's something I've definitely focused on. I mean, I'm just trying to get all parts of my game better. [I've been] honing in on the details of route-running, reading man vs. zone [coverage] — all of that type of stuff. Just so I could come out here and make plays so that [QB Philip] Phil [Rivers] can trust me to be a viable option for him. I think I did a little bit of that last year, trying to build on that this year."

On the benefits of a joint practice:

"It's fun, it's competitive. It's just that environment, you know. It gets us out of the monotony of going against each other all the time. It was a long practice, as you guys saw, but just having that competition brings the best out of you and your competitive spirit. It makes you go out there, want to have fun and make plays. It's a really good taste before that first preseason game, especially for the younger guys. I guess I consider myself somewhat of a veteran now. For the first-year guys, to kind of get a taste of what NFL games are going to be like because guys are coming out here and competing like it is a game."

On the intensity of practice:

"It didn't really get too chippy and I think everyone was really professional, just kept it between the whistles — which I think is a good thing. I wasn't here two years ago, but I heard it was much different. I think both teams have matured a little bit. We're just both focused on keeping each other healthy. No one's trying to get hurt out here or get anyone else hurt. Just play between whistles."

On how he feels compared to last season:

"I just feel more comfortable, more composed. I know the offense is much better. I think everything's just slowed down a lot for me — my reads and everything. I feel healthier than I've been, more explosive, stronger and just more confident, really. Just to go out there, have fun, make plays and not think. Especially at the running back position, once you start thinking even if you think you're playing fast, you're playing much slower than you could be. That's what I've tried to work on, just getting the details of the game even more down than I had it — really learn the offense to every single detail. Even what my fullback is doing, what my line is doing, so I can a pre-snap read to have an idea of where I might take the ball. Once the ball is snapped, it's just instinct from there."

On RB Melvin Gordon III:

"He has talked to us all separately, talked to us before camp. Obviously, he has to do what he has to do. We're holding it down until he gets back, but we all love him. He's a part of this room — he knows that and we all know that. We'll interact with him on social media too, he's always keeping light, keeping it funny. That's just the type of guy he is. He's a great leader. Like I said, we are just waiting for him to get back, but until then we're all just trying to carve out a piece of where we might fit into this offense."

On splitting extra reps:

"Obviously, when [Melvin] Mel [Gordon] is here, he gets a majority of the first-team reps. Just for us to be able to mesh with [C Mike] Pounce [Pouncey] — [T Russell] Russ [Okung] is not out here — but [G/T Michael] Scho [Schofield III], [G Dan] Feeney, [T Sam] Tevi. and all those guys — [T] Trent [Scott] and even [QB Philip] Phil [Rivers]. Just to have that mesh, to kind of develop that trust is really important. You just go out there and the more reps you get, the more comfortable you feel playing with the guys around you, the better you can be as a player and as an offense. That's huge for me. I know it's huge for [RB Austin] Eck [Ekeler], too. I think we're all trying to expand our game. Obviously, Mel is a bell-cow [back]. Gets a lot of those inside runs, and runs in general. For all of us to be able to get some those runs, too, and kinda feel that out and get more experience with that, I think it's really important."

On RB Austin Ekeler:

"Yeah. That's my dude. I mean we're out there almost every play, we're talking, giving each other advice, kind of just dissecting the play. We both love the game like that. We both study the game like that. We both really feed off of each other's energy. We're different types of backs, but we do some things similar to each other. Like I said, we're different in other ways, but I think we complement each other well. We just try and build off each other. We never tear each other down or anything like that. The whole running back room, we're a very tight-knit group. It's real. We have a lot of fun in the meetings. [Running Backs] Coach [Alfredo] Fredo [Roberts] keeps it light. I think that helps us to come out here and just play with freedom, play with energy and not go out there scared to make a mistake or anything. That's something I appreciate and I know all the other guys appreciate it as well."



On the running backs:

"I think we're all just trying to come out here and, like I said, carve a spot out for ourselves on this team, on this offense. By committee, one player getting the majority of the reps — I don't think anybody's thinking about that right now. It's all about what can you do to get yourself prepared for the season, what you can do each day to improve your game? I think that's what I love about this team and about each player individually — everyone is trying to build on their own game so that you can add more value to the team. I know that's what I'm trying to do every single day out here. I can pretty confidently say that's what the other guys are thinking too."

On Head Coach Anthony Lynn:

"He comes in the room a lot and gives us a lot of nuggets of wisdom. Obviously, like you said he played the position, so he has a passion for the spot. Our running backs coach [Alfredo Roberts] always jokes he's the assistant running backs coach because when Coach Lynn comes in there he kind of comes in there and he wants it a certain way. We're all like, 'Okay, we're going to do it a certain way.' Like I said, I think it's important for us to take that advice, take that wisdom and just apply it on the field because he's been in that position so long. He obviously knows what he's talking about. Those little details are what can take a running back from here to the next level. That's what I've tried to take in when he gives us those little nuggets of wisdom."

On Coach Lynn being a former running back:

"You know, obviously he has high expectations for us. He wants things done a certain way, but at the end of the day, I think you just go out there, be confident and play your game. As a running back, you know that each running back is different. Each running back has a different set of moves or a different set of strengths and weaknesses. You just have to go out there and be yourself. If you try to go out there and be a robot, that's the exact opposite of what the running back position is. You've got to go out there and be instinctual — don't think, just go out there and play. I think he understands that."

On what he's focused on improving:

"Definitely pass [protection]. I think all of us are working on that. Obviously, you don't really sign up to go out there and be basically turned into an offensive lineman when someone's blitzing, but you have to go out there, step up and protect the quarterback. That's something that you know not a lot of us did a lot in college. I did it a good amount, but other guys barely did it at all in college. I think that's something we're all trying to build upon. Like I said, just working on the details, reads, steps, being efficient with your feet. In the NFL everything is so fast, so a split second could really make a difference between a three-yard run and a 40-yard run. I'm just trying to focus in on those details, watching a lot of tape on other backs in the league — Melvin [Gordon], even [Austin] Eck [Ekeler], our guys too. I'm just trying to take little parts of their game out of my game and just trying to be a complete back."

On the emotional excitement of training camp:

"I love coming out here every single day. I wake up every morning with a chip on my shoulder. I'm trying to come out here, make this team, be a part of this offense, make my plays when I can and I think just build upon myself and build upon last year, and build upon each day. When you have that mindset, I think it gives you a certain kind of energy where even if you're tired, your legs or whatever, you come out here. When you get between those lines and you have Philip Rivers standing next to you, you're like, 'Alright, I'm ready to go. I'm ready to go out here and make a play.' That's always been my mindset and I think this year I'm just more confident in that and more confident in my abilities. Just more composed and not as rushed out there."

On fantasy football:

"I know it's a huge thing for the fans. It's fun, I used to do fantasy football before last year. It's fun, you feel like you have your own team, you're a [General Manager], all that stuff, but honestly when you're out there, you're just trying to do your best. You're not really too worried, 'Oh am I going to get eight, ten fantasy points?' You don't worry about that. You're trying to go out and win a game. It's a good way for the fans to connect with us, but like I said, at the end of the day we don't think too much about it."

