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LOS ANGELES CHARGERS vs. MINNESOTA VIKINGS POSTGAME TRANSCRIPTS

Sunday, Dec. 15, 2019 | ROKiT Field at Dignity Health Sports Park | Carson, Calif.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH ANTHONY LYNN

Opening statement:

“Seven turnovers. We got our ass kicked in all three phases. Any questions?”

On the turnovers:

“We had seven fumbles all year, so we can hold on to the football. It was bad. I give [Vikings Head Coach Mike] Zim [Zimmer] and his staff a lot of credit because they forced those turnovers, but we’ve got to do a better job, period.”

On if considering changing quarterback:

“I didn’t think the quarterback was the reason why we turned the football over. I mean, he threw a Hail Mary at the end, but the seven turnovers, that wasn’t on him. I think he had or one fumble and an interception but no, not right now.”

On Minnesota scoring before the half:

“I mean, that didn’t help [with momentum], them scoring before the half. If we score before the half, we come back out and we have the ball, that’s what we are hoping for but it didn’t happen.”

On RB Austin Ekeler:

“Well, you say that because if he picked up the ball and he ran for a touchdown, you write great job, but he picked up the ball, couldn’t hold onto it and they got it. That’s just what happened. I can’t explain it.”

On TE Hunter Henry’s fumble:

“I mean, they looked at it in New York because that’s a turnover. They have to look at that in New York and make that decision. I could have challenged it, I guess to give them more time to look at it, but I don’t think that would have helped.”

On RB Melvin Gordon III:

“I gave him a break. Yes, I was bothered by the fumbles, yes.”

On DB Desmond King II:

“Coach’s decision.”

On the reason being the same as last week:

“As far as me making that decision, yes.”

On Gordon:

“No, he was prepared. He played his tail off last week, he practiced good all week, he was just more careless with the ball today for whatever reason.”

On coming off the win in Jacksonville:

“Well, last week was last week. The letdown, for me, was that I haven’t seen that team all year. We’ve gotten beat, but we’ve never gotten beat like that and that was my problem today. That’s my frustration right now. I haven’t seen that team in the three years since I’ve been here.”



On the message to the players:

"We'll look at it tomorrow, we'll make the corrections and we'll get back focused. We will refocus and finish the season out the best we can, but I have no idea where that came from. That's very uncharacteristic of our football team [to have] that many fumbles.

On WR Mike Williams:

"Mike's playing through it. Everybody in the National Football League is hurt right now but Mike is playing through it."

On T Russell Okung:

"I have no idea right now. I don't think it was a re-injury, I think it was the opposite of that. Like I said, right now, I don't have any information."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS QUARTERBACK PHILIP RIVERS**On the game:**

"It was a tough loss. We made too many mistakes and we do that against what's now a 10-win team, usually doesn't go over well. We put our defense in a tough spot, but they hung in there. Eventually mistakes just kind of snowballed out of control and they pulled away from us."

On the team fighting till the end:

"I think last week and I thought so this week. It was going to be a 12-10 half, maybe 13-12 us. Sack-fumble goes for a touchdown. Then it goes 19-10 and we fumble the first play of the second half, then the defense gets another stop. We just kept making mistakes. I don't think it was a lack of fight and I don't think we will have lack of fight in the next two weeks. This loss doesn't deteriorate our fight, well at least I hope not."

On the seven turnovers:

"I mean you could look at seven and I know the number is the number. It is still too many. I think the number seven is a false way to tell the story. The last two had zero impact on the game, the others certainly do. We were better not turning the ball over the last two games. The previous two, Denver and Jacksonville, we had one. It really gave us a chance to win both of those. One of those we won in blowout fashion and the other one we gave ourselves the chance. Today, it was too many. Our defense kept holding them to three [points]. Then [DE] Melvin [Ingram III] gets the interception right back and it kind of cancels that one out right away, so they didn't score on that one. It was just too many and it ended up costing us. Obviously, the drive that stalled out right there down 25-10, the first play in the fourth quarter, not getting anything. That was the one drive they did put together, offensively, to make it tougher. Then we turned it over the first play back."

On the importance of the next two games:

"I think everything is important. You've heard me say the phrase everything matters. I think everything matters. Every throw, every interaction, every interview, they all matter regardless of what situation you are in. I think it gives you the chance to show your character, show that fight and desire to go play — play for each other and play for the team and all of the above. I think, collectively and individually, we are going to play them like they're the last two. That is all I can do and see what goes from there. That is the only way I know how to go about it."

On WR Mike Williams:

"Yeah, he's played great. Obviously, you see he's a bit hobbled, too. I mean he's been battling all year. The contested catches that he makes are awesome and you know, Mike's doing an unbelievable job. I'm not saying this to get any credit on any of these throws, but they're intentionally thrown where they're thrown because of the player that he is, like you've seen over the years with [former WR] Malcom [Floyd] and those guys. You give a guy like that a chance and you put it in a place where you think is a good spot and then he makes it right. He showed a lot of toughness and a lot of fight. I don't know what he ended up with today and obviously he only cares about winning, too, but I think at the end of this year when you look up and see that he'll have over 50 balls and over a 1,000 yards and lead the league in average-per-catch — it's quite a big jump from year one when we didn't know what he's going to end up, with the back injury and the whole deal. He goes double-digit touchdowns one year and then the following year he's going to have the year he has. So, it's really, truly been awesome to see the way he's played."



On whether the next two games could be his last with the Chargers:

“Yeah, I mean they could be. I don’t necessarily expect that it is, or I don’t necessarily think it’s a crazy thought that it will be. I think you just don’t know so. I think you always don’t take any of it for granted. I sure hope I haven’t. I don’t feel like I have over 16 years, but I think this is a unique situation in terms of contract being up, it being a bit of a bumpy year to say the least, and you just don’t know that uncertainty. Even more so now, these last two against Oakland and Kansas City, that you know, you take it all in just in case.”

On the shock of this game after last week’s win:

“Yeah, it was a tough day. Again, the turnovers obviously were catching up with us. We had some really good drives, made a lot of really good plays. There was a few plays out there today that were made, offensively, that would probably be in our top-20 plays of the year, offensively. Maybe not to everyone, but the things that happened that we executed were awesome. We put together some good drives, but when you turn it over the way we did early — again the ones late, I’m over the stats except the ones that hurt us. Certainly, there were some that hurt us, no doubt, and those obviously caught up with us. We hung in there, our defense kept us in there. I mean, the two right away that we had, fumble in the first half and the fumble to start the third, you look up and it’s still a two-score game, let’s go. We felt good about it, we just couldn’t — stalling out there again, the long eight-minute drive, or however many minutes we had, and then the first play of the fourth quarter that we were stopped on the fourth down. That was the one drive they get that they put together. That was a tough sequence right there. Again, we didn’t quit. I think we turned it over the next very play again, but it was tough.”

On the Vikings defense:

“I think it’s a good defense. I have great respect for [Vikings Head] Coach [Mike] Zimmer and that defense. It’s always a challenging week of preparation, I told him that before the game. It’s always a fun week of preparation, but challenging. They do a nice job. The two inside linebackers are great communicators and some of the pressures they over make it tough. They have two really good defensive ends and I think [Vikings S] Harrison [Smith], the safety, No. 22, does a heck of a job. That’s not to short the other guys, but those guys kind of run it from all three levels. They do a nice job. They make you earn everything, and they made us earn it today. Again, they caused all of those turnovers, we self-inflicted some of them, but it’s a good team. They’ve won 10 games and they’ll be playing in January.”

On a losing record:

“It is tough, especially with the expectations we had in the beginning of the year, especially in the fashion that we lost some of these games. Eight of the nine now have been one score. Not just one-score like we cut it to seven with 32 seconds left and were down all game. They were all one score in games that we could have or, in some ways, should have won. That means you tougher because you talk about that much difference — a play here or a play there in two or three of those games and we could be sitting 8-6 right now, still in the mix — or 7-7 and still in the mix. That is what makes it even tougher. Again, it has been a bumpy year and the only way I know is to keep playing. I told the guys that in the huddle earlier when it was 32-10, ‘We only know one way. We’re going to go.’ That is the only way I know moving forward these next two weeks is we will just go. We get to play the Oakland Raiders, the last time they will be the Oakland Raiders. We get to play Kansas City and I hope they are playing for a bye. It makes it more fun.”

On the motivation to come back after this offseason:

“Yeah, it is not solely going to be my decision. That’s where I think that certainly lies. We will just kind of have to see, I think when the dust settles on December 29th and 30th, and times goes from there it will all play out. I think with that uncertainty, it does add some emotion and it adds some intentional appreciation for what could be the last two even though they may not be. I think just with that uncertainty comes that approach and emotion.”

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS WIDE RECEIVER KEENAN ALLEN**On what it means to have another 1,000-yard receiving season:**

“Just staying consistent, staying available. Doing my job.”

On preparation for the last two games:

“Just playing football. You can’t be perfect out there. There’s going to be some bad plays, some good plays. You just have to overcome it.”



LOS ANGELES CHARGERS LINEBACKER THOMAS DAVIS SR.

On learning from today's loss:

"We're going to go back and we're going to watch the film. We're going to correct some of the mistakes that were made out here today. We made a ton of them — offensively, defensively and on special teams — we made a ton of mistakes. Uncharacteristic mistakes and those are the things that, as a football team, you can't allow to happen."

On what he told his teammates after the game, as a veteran leader:

"We gotta stay together. We're going to go out. We're going to compete hard. Work together as a football team. We've got to finish this season the right way."

On how difficult the offense's mistakes were on the defense:

"We've got to do our job. We've got to keep them out of the end zone. That's what we get paid to do as defensive players. It doesn't matter the situation. We've just got to make sure that we hold them to a field goal or possibly try to take the ball away. That's what we've got to do. We can't control what happens offensively. They didn't want to go out and turn the ball over. The other team gets paid. They make plays too. We've got to do a better job defensively of creating more opportunities for them when we have things like that happen."

On staying united as a team:

"It's the truth. That's how I feel. It's part of the game. That's how it goes. Sometimes, they turn the ball over. Sometimes, they score. We've just got to, like I said, do our job. It's not a situation where we're going to divide or separate and point fingers at the offense. Because we've had times where we didn't do our job and made the other stop. It's all about staying together as a football team. That's what we have to do."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS RUNNING BACK AUSTIN EKELER

On the team's turnover woes:

"It kind of snowballed there, huh? I feel like we couldn't catch a break with turnovers, putting the ball on the ground. Pretty uncharacteristic of us."

On if their blowout was a result of being eliminated from playoff contention:

"I don't know. I was talking to the guys in the bathroom, like, 'What? Nothing was different.' The mindset wasn't different. We were practicing hard still. Coming out like, 'Hey, let's go win a game. Hey, we're not in the playoff picture anymore but we're still playing for each other and our fans.'"

On the team's goals going forward :

"We're playing for each other. We're playing for our individual selves financially moving forward and we're playing for our fans. That's all that we're playing for right now. So, the playoff picture is out of it. That's just one thing that's out of it that we can't do and we can't control that. So, we've got to move forward."

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS DEFENSIVE END MELVIN INGRAM III

On the interception:

"It was just something I saw. I wish I could have gotten 10 of them so we could have won."

On how the Vikings came to play:

"They just played better. They came to win a game and that's what they did. They came out and they were the better team today. You have to take your hat off to them."



LOS ANGELES CHARGERS SAFETY DERWIN JAMES JR.

On the turnovers:

“We still had opportunities on defense to try and stop them. We had our opportunities. We have to take care of the football and, on defense, we have to stop them from scoring because we gave up like four touchdowns.”

On defending a short field so often:

“We have a job to do. Whatever hand we are dealt as a defense we don’t look at as impossible — we look at it as the next opportunity to go out there and make plays and put the fire out. As a defense, we don’t look at it as, ‘Oh, we have to go on the field now.’ We embrace those moments.

On if there will be any nostalgia after leaving for new stadium:

“No. For me, I’m just excited to play in every one of them. Everybody knows my season was cut short this year. It doesn’t matter where we are playing. Every week I am just happy to play out there.”

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS WIDE RECEIVER MIKE WILLIAMS

On how it has been playing through injuries this season:

“I’m still making plays. I’m used to it.”

On the turnovers:

“It’s frustrating. You have to score points. When we’re in our red zone, we have to get points.”

On the importance of the last two games:

“We just have to finish strong. That’s the main thing. We’ll see who loves the game and who likes it. People who love it are going to keep fighting.”



MINNESOTA VIKINGS HEAD COACH MIKE ZIMMER

Opening Statement:

“Good win today. It was nice to get a win. Obviously, the turnovers were big and getting that turnover right before the half and touchdown was big. The start of the second half with the turnover, was big, as well. I thought our offense did a really nice job today. They got a terrific couple of pass rushers there. I thought our offensive line did a nice job. I thought [QB] Kirk [Cousins] played very well. He made a couple great throws, the one to [WR Stefon] Diggs late in the game was big, and the one to [TE] Kyle [Rudolph] was a big one. I thought we played really well today. I thought [RB Mike] Boone came in and ran hard and defensively, it was nice to see us get some turnovers.”

On the high amount of turnovers:

“When you can do that, obviously, it turns the game around. We knew that they had minus in turnover margin, so it was important that we try to get some today. That was good. We still got a lot of things to work on, a lot of things to clean up. We got a big game on Monday night.”

On how badly the Vikings needed this win:

“Well, we need them all now, If you’re going to do what you got to do, you need to go win games. But I will say this about this team, it’s not easy to win 10 games in this league. For us to go out and get our tenth win, and still have a couple of opportunities to get a couple more, that’s big. We have a bunch of fighters. I appreciate the way they work.”

On Vikings RB Dalvin Cook’s injury:

“I don’t know. I’m not a doctor.”

On if RB Dalvin Cook’s injury is the same one as before:

“No, it’s not.”

On if he knows a timeline for RB Dalvin Cook:

“No, I don’t.”

On if he can remember another game with seven turnovers:

“No. I know it hasn’t happened for the Vikings in 25 years or something. No, I don’t think so. We were fortunate today in some things. [Chargers QB Philip] Rivers is a great quarterback. He’s got terrific receivers. We were very fortunate today.”

On the importance of players stepping up and making big plays:

“[DE] Ifeadi [Odenigbo] has played well all year. He did a nice job coming in and getting in the nickel. That was big play, he hustles all the time. That was great for us. The game was kind of going back and forth at that point. For us to get that right before the half was really big. We have all of our guys who have done a nice job setting up, too. Like today, [RB Mike] Boone and [WR] Olabisi Johnson has played well throughout the course of the year. [LB] Eric Wilson, we’ve had a lot of guys come in and it’s a credit to the scouts and the coaches doing a nice job getting these guys prepared. [DT Armon] Watts has played quite a bit lately, [DT] Jaleel Johnson. All those things are good.”

On RB Mike Boone:

“Boone ran really hard, really well. We knew this kid was a really good runner from what he’s done in preseason and practice. He’s kind of had a chip on his shoulder. He wants to get out there and prove his point that he can go out and run and be that type of [running] back, as well.”

On S Harrison Smith:

“Harrison is a great competitor. Very smart. I was telling radio a minute ago, he was giving me some suggestions on the sideline, of what to call. I was going to give him the headset and let him do it. He’s a terrific competitor and good football player.”

On K Dan Bailey:

“Going into the game today, I knew going that way, it was going to be a tough special teams. With the kickoffs and punts and all of the things going on there. It hit the goal post, but Dan [Bailey] has been kicking great all year. Then he came back and made a bunch of them. We have a lot of confidence in him. He’s done a great job this year.”



On WR Adam Thielen:

"I think he did well. He had a couple nice catches, I don't know how many, I didn't look at the stats. It was good to get him back."

On winning on the road before Green Bay:

"It was big. We had Detroit last week, we had this game, and we know we have Green Bay coming up. Then we have some division games at the end. For us to go out there and fight the way we did, and compete, and do what we needed to do to keep ourselves in the running, that's all you can ask for, really."

On if he likes where they currently sit in the playoff standings:

"I like being at home because we have great fans. It's going to be loud, should be a heck of a football game on Monday night. Green Bay is obviously really good and [QB Aaron] Rodgers is always a tough out. They have a terrific runner in [RB] Aaron Jones and the defense is playing well. Should be a heck of a ball game. They say get your popcorn ready."

MINNESOTA VIKINGS QUARTERBACK KIRK COUSINS**Opening Statement:**

"Anytime you can win on the road in the NFL, it's a great thing. It's good to get to 10 wins. We're in a bit of a race here at the end of the season, so every win is really important. Anytime your defense gets seven turnovers, it changes the entire complexion of the game. We got a lot of short fields, and it made a big difference. I think [DE] Ifeadi's [Odenigbo] touchdown at the end of the half was the play of the game for a lot of reasons, so it made a big difference. It was disappointing that our offense didn't get more points off of those turnovers because we were given the short field quite a bit. We just did not take full advantage of it, and that was disappointing. It was great to see how well we ran the ball there at the end of the game. They knew we were going to run the football, and I thought we were still able to have some success which was great to see. I thought Mike Boone did an outstanding job running the football. I think C.J. Ham has continued to show what he's capable of when the football is in his hands — on a screen pass and running it — he does a really good job. It was kind of another game of spreading the football around and letting a lot of people make plays for us. Diggs's [Stefon Diggs] catch on the sideline at the end of the half right before the interception was one of the better catches I've ever seen. I've been saying that a lot this year about some of the catches he's made, but that was an unbelievable catch. We made enough plays today, and our defense obviously really helped us out. Special teams made some plays as well, so I'll take any questions you have."

On the Vikings position in the playoffs race:

"It's still all up for grabs. We've got to finish strong. It's a two-game season now, and with the way we've played the first four teams, we've put our self in a position to have a lot to play for these last two games. Ten wins is a good place to be, but there's a better place to be and that'd be 11 or 12., That's what we're chasing. The NFC is pretty talented at the top, and so it's going to take a great effort these last two weeks to be able to get seeded and get in. Additionally, we've got to be playing good football to have a chance if we can get in the playoffs because the NFC is loaded with talent. We want to be playing our best football as we get towards the end of the year."

On RB Dalvin Cook being ready for Monday Night Football:

"Just take it one day at a time and see where we are come next Monday. We'll be in no hurry to get him out there on the field. We'll be patient with it. Whether he goes or not, we'll have a plan. Mike Boone and Ameer Abdullah, Alex Mattison — whoever we're calling on — C.J. Ham. Thankfully we've asked a lot of them this year, and they've shown they're very capable of handling a larger role."

On what they can do better offensively to cash in on turnovers:

"We have to be more productive on first and second downs. Too many times we're in third and seven or third and six and didn't really do anything on first and second down. If they're going to drop eight and play low to the zone, it's tough to convert on third down in the tight red. We jumped offsides on a third down, which took a third and manageable to a third and long. It was a combination of things that hurt us. When you kick field goals, it's tough to win in this league. Good teams, teams that win in the playoffs and win late in the year are scoring touchdowns and not kicking field goals. We kicked too many field goals, but again, when your defense gets more turnovers, it gets you more bites at the apple."



On how much appreciation he has towards the defense:

"It's such a team game. We could have put up more points with how many turnovers and how many short fields we got. We didn't take advantage of it enough, so I just felt like our defense put us in such a good spot that we didn't do enough to take advantage of it, so I'm going to look at it a little critically and not just look at the result, but look at the process and our role as an offense or as a quarterback and see what we can do to get better."

On the team's comradery:

"It's always been a good locker room. I could sense that when I first arrived. There were just a lot of hardworking players that didn't have big egos or big agenda. They just wanted to win. I felt like I could fit into that culture pretty quickly. Comradery is certainly built stronger when you win. It's a lot easier to have a good locker room and to enjoy your week when you're winning football games. I've been a part of a 3-13 and 4-12 team. It can be a different dynamic. Nobody likes losing, so when you win the weeks tend to go a little faster, the season tends to be a little more enjoyable and certainly at 10-4 it's more enjoyable than 4-10."

On the number of Vikings fans that traveled:

"Just proud to be playing for a team that will travel like that. It was outstanding. I can't say enough about how they have traveled all season long. I think back to Arrowhead and the energy they brought, but today was a tremendous asset to have them take up so much of the stands and be so vocal. Not every team travels like that so I am just proud to claim a team that does."

On challenges does a traveling fan base eliminate with the offense:

"Communication is a little cleaner. I would think it helps our defense as well, when their offense has to deal with the challenges that comes with the noise. You know we didn't want to get lulled to sleep at all either though. Still wanted to be ready to communicate because when you're in an away stadium their person on the loud speaker is going to be loud and try to create noise as well. We still had some noise at times and had to communicate over it, but it's just great to have the backing and energy of your fans there in an away stadium."

On Stefon Diggs play over the last two weeks:

"He has done a great job all year. He's a special player. Some of his elite traits, one would be the hands, the ability to make that catch that he made at the sideline. He caught a ball at third down over the middle and it was a big time catch in a tight window. He did a great job of holding on in traffic. He tracks the football as well as anybody. On the ball that was ruled out of bounds that he caught but had a foot out of bounds that we thought was a completion. He just does such a good job of getting his eyes up and adjusting to the football, if I back shoulder or bring him down the field. He gives me the freedom to throw the ball different places and he'll adjust. I wish I had been able to step into the throw more on third and long because he probably would have had a touchdown there if had been able to put more on it but the rush bearing down. Just glad I got it there and completed it and finished off the drive."

On getting a division title over a wild card title:

"Well it would certainly be a big help to be able to have a home playoff game, but honestly its first things first. What's important is beating the Packers and were not going to spend time and energy thinking about all that's out of our control. We have plenty in our control and we will focus on that. But it is no secret that to have a home playoff game would help and the Packers know that too. So, it's going to be two good football teams going on it next Monday night."

On how confident he is going into the next game being 0-8 for Monday night games:

"Yeah it's a great opportunity to end that and hopefully get a win on Monday night. I am looking forward to the challenge. I need to get more cracks at Monday night definitely to be able to get a win. This one will be a great opportunity"

On any concerns with Dalvin Cook:

"Hopefully he can get healed quickly and ready to go. Tough to see him go down in any capacity. He is going to do all he can, I know that, to be at full strength. We'll respond accordingly to him. We got to be resilient football team when you face a little adversity and one of your better players go down we got to be able to pick up the slack. And I thought today our guys did that and we will have to do that if necessary next week."



On Mike Boone:

“He was outstanding. I can’t say enough about Mike. You guys saw in the preseason. He just hasn’t got enough cracks at it because we have Dalvin Cook [RB] and Alex Mattison [RB]. The nature of the NFL is there is some really good football players who may not get as many opportunities as others and you have to make the most of the ones that you get. Mike has done that. People around the league have taken notice. He’s going to be a good back in this league for a long time if he stays at because he has all the ability.”

On having Adam Thielen:

“Well there was a big third down conversion that we made off schedule. There’s just a lot of trust and confidence. He should have had another third down conversion. I worked the opposite side away from him. Had to say no to it. By the time I got back to him it had been open, but I got to him too late. That would have been another conversion to him if I had started with him. It was just good to have him back. You remember quickly how nice it is to have a target with that much experience, the hands, and natural feel for the position. Didn’t have a lot of attempts, cracks at it today, just didn’t need it. I fully expect to be relying on him in the weeks ahead.”

MINNESOTA VIKINGS RUNNING BACK MIKE BOONE**On stepping up this game:**

“For sure. Coach, he prepared us enough and made sure we were very prepared. That’s how it was able to happen. Any one of us could step up and play that role.”

On if where his game has grown the most this season:

“A lot. Watching those guys [RB Dalvin Cook and RB Alexander Mattison], you learn a lot pass protection wise. Pass pro and just the little things. Being there and correcting the small details.”

On if he feels good about his position at this point:

“My number was called and I try to be there. We’ve got two big games. Just come in and execute. Try to control our destiny.”

MINNESOTA VIKINGS WIDE RECEIVER STEFON DIGGS**On being able to control their path to the playoffs:**

“We still have to win out. We have to win all of our games in front of us, have success and keep doing it with this offense. The defense is playing lights out. We have a lot of football left.”

On the urgency and mindset the Vikings had going into this game:

“We just wanted to come in here and take care of business. You always want to go in with the mindset that you are going to win and have the confidence that you are going to have success when you are out there. So, for us, just preparing throughout the week. We know everything is not going to be perfect, but we are still trying to do everything we can.”

On the Vikings second half success:

“It was a rough first half. We had some miscues and some errors we tried to avoid. Things happen and the defense held it down. We played complimentary football and tried to keep that good thing going.”

On the stadium environment:

“That was like a home game. I didn’t really see any baby blue jerseys but I saw a lot of purple. You are always happy when you get your fans to come out. It was kind of loud in there, too. I don’t know how many seats are in there but I saw a lot of purple. It had us fired up and ready to go.”

On how the Vikings defense played:

“[We forced] seven turnovers. That’s a lot of turnovers. I thought that was a record or something like that. It was the defense playing how the defense plays. They have been doing what they can and at the end of the day, everybody does their job. So, for us, we are just trying to keep that going.”



MINNESOTA VIKINGS TIGHT END IRV SMITH JR.

On what he saw on his touchdown:

“You know, I just have fun. I felt like once we practice that play a lot in practice and the coaches are confident about it, all we have to do is call it. We knew it was going to be a touchdown.”

On the importance of establishing the tone on the opening drive:

“Definitely, starting fast is something you especially need to do on the road — to keep the fans involved and to get a nice start to the offense. You know, we’re confident throughout each drive and I felt like we did a good job of that.”

On how important it was to win the game:

“We knew it was going to be tough playing on the road. We know we have these next two games at home, which is big for us. I feel like we just wanted to come out, start fast, and finish this with a ‘W’ so we can move on to the next weeks.”

On honoring high school coach with his cleats:

“My high school coach, coach Mark Bonis, has been there for me throughout a lot of my life. He had a very tough injury — I just wanted to honor him. He was supposed to make it to this game, actually.”

MINNESOTA VIKINGS WIDE RECEIVER ADAM THIELEN

On the Vikings position in their conference:

“For us we’re not really worried about our position or any things like that. We are worried about Green Bay [Packers] now and Monday Night Football. We know we’re going to have our work cut out this week. They are a great football team and have won a lot of games this year so far. So, we are just going to prepare for them like it’s just another week.”

On RB Dalvin Cook’s injury:

“It’s tough to see him go down. We know how tough he is and how much he means to this football team. So, I’m sure he’ll be back out there playing again and doing his thing. It’s tough to see him go out, but we know how tough he is, he’s a fighter.”

On their offensive performance in today’s game:

“We just have so many guys that can make plays on this team and for our offense. We trust anybody that goes in there to make a play. It’s fun when you have a group like that and it makes it tough on defenses. It allows for you to do so much in terms of ability as an offense. We are very fortunate in that aspect. It hasn’t always been that way so, we are very fortunate. It’s going to help us moving forward and you’ve seen that in the last few weeks. All of those reps and guys making plays is going to help us moving forward.”

On how he feels about being back out on the field:

“Yeah it’s good to be back out there with my teammates and get a win. I love the fight and try to win so, it’s good to be back out there”

On defensive performance in today’s game:

“Our defense played great. They gave us a lot of opportunities with a short field to score points, but there is a lot to learn from because we need to score more and take advantages of those opportunities.”

