

Chargers Week 12 Media Availability

Wednesday, November 22, 2023 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

HEAD COACH BRANDON STALEY

On QB Justin Herbert 'showing emotion' following the delay of game penalty:

"That's a great thing. It's just a competitor out there competing. He and [C] Will [Clapp] are tight. There's a lot that goes on out there in the game. There's no one that cares more than Justin [Herbert]. I love seeing that."

On Herbert 'learning and developing' from adverse situations during a game:

"Justin [Herbert] has been a quarterback his whole life, so Justin knows how to lead a football team. Wherever he's been, he's been extremely successful doing it. I think what Justin has is he has the full respect of his teammates because of who he is and how hard he works. When there is a moment that happens like that, everybody knows that it's coming from a good place because he's earned that mantle of respect. I think it's energizing for everybody on the sideline because he doesn't do it often. We all know how special of a competitor Justin is and that that was coming from a good place."

On Herbert's 'judgment' in 'emotional' situations:

"I just trust Justin's judgment. I think that's part of being a quarterback, you have to use your judgment. It's good to go with what you're feeling sometimes. When you're in the heat of competition, there are going to be some times when it gets edgy. When you're the quarterback, there's no one that is more responsible for more than you. Him and Will [Clapp] are great teammates, Will and him have an awesome connection. They're not the only center-quarterback tandem in the history of the league to have something like that happen. All you have to do is go on YouTube to find it, any of the great players that have ever played that position. We're past that and we're on to the next thing."

On Herbert and Clapp:

"Those two guys are awesome."

On Hall of Fame QB Peyton Manning 'being the example of that':

"Yeah, pick a quarterback and I'm sure that there have been a bunch of them."

On the Ravens' offense:

"A complete team. My respect goes out to [Ravens TE] Mark Andrews because he is one hell of a player. Hopefully, he gets well soon. I think they have a full stable of running backs, a full stable of receivers. Even with Mark out, they have three really capable tight ends and an offensive line. They've had some attrition, but they've been able to withstand it. When you have [Ravens QB] Lamar [Jackson] at quarterback, it's as tough of a coverage as you're going to have in the league. They're doing a good job offensively."

On 'how much work was done on' Ravens WR Zay Flowers:

"Did a lot of work on Zay [Flowers]. That whole group of receivers in that first round, we did a lot of work on all of those guys. He's having a good season for them. What he did at Boston College, he's able to move within the formation — he can play in the slot, he can play out wide, he's carried the football for them. He has a diverse route tree. He played in a pro style system for [former Boston College Offensive Coordinator and Quarterbacks Coach] Frank Cignetti [Jr.] at Boston College, so he was able to run a pro [route] tree. He's having a good season for them. That receiving corps with [Ravens WR] Odell [Beckham Jr.] and [Ravens WR Nelson] Agholor and [Ravens WR Rashod] Bateman and that group of guys, it's a deep receiving corps — as deep of a receiving corps as they've had."

On 'replacing' OLB Joey Bosa:

"You have to do it as a group. We've had to play a lot of games here without Joey [Bosa]. We're going to miss him. It's tough for me with Joey because he's had such a good offseason. He's been totally committed. I thought he was having an outstanding season. He's enduring the tough side of the NFL, but we're going to be there for him. He has to make his way back. What we have to do is hold the rope for him until he gets back, like we did last year. This group held it down, and then Joey got a chance to come back and impact our team. We're going to have to do it as a unit. I thought [OLB] Justin [Hollins] came in and gave us some really good snaps. [OLB] Andrew [Farmer II] is a guy that's been working and that we think has potential. [OLB] Tuli [Tuipulotu] and K-Mack [OLB Khalil Mack] are going to have to continue to do what they do. But, you have to do it as a group. No one is going to take away Joey's production, he is one of the top players in the league."

On Tuipulotu's growth:

"Every day, his growth has been consistent. There have not been any peaks and valleys. He keeps going this way. I just think that he learns more and more every time he goes out there. But, you've seen him consistently impact the game in all of our games. We're going to continue to need him to do that for us. The tough part about being a rookie is that it's at this point right now where the college season is ending, and then you still have seven or more games after that. He just has to stay consistent with his routine. He's been productive for us and he is going to have to continue to be that for us."

On CB Michael Davis and 'inconsistency in the secondary':

"We haven't played well enough in the secondary. It just hasn't been consistent this year at all. That's where we have fallen short, in the passing game, this season. He's the guy that's working hard. He just has to stay with it and continue to get the confidence on the practice field to go out there and take it to the field. We're going to need that, starting this week against Baltimore. They have a good group of receivers. It's him and the whole secondary — it's not just Mike [Davis], it's the whole secondary. We need to play better. That's a big focus for us."

On what the team has 'gotten out of' LB Eric Kendricks this season:

"A lot. One of the best additions that we've made since we've been here. Just a commander, a guy that has really, I think, solidified the interior of our defense. You can see the big jump that we've made in the run game, a lot of it is because of what he can see, key-diagnose. He's an outstanding tackler. He made a couple of big-time tackles in the last game. Then, from pass defense standpoint, there's no one in the middle of the field that's been better than him in the last decade, in terms of matching patterns and playing in the passing game. All that knowledge that he's giving to K9 [LB Kenneth Murray Jr.] and that group of young linebackers — [LB] Nick [Niemann] and [LB] Daiyan [Henley] and [LB] Amen [Ogbongbemiga] — you can't minimize it. He's just been one of those stable, steady forces for us. I've really enjoyed coaching him."

On if Kendricks has been 'playing at a level' that resembles the rest of his career:

"Definitely. Outside of the people that coached him in Minnesota, no one has watched him more than I have, so I know who I am watching. I think that he has played exactly how we had hoped that he would for us."

On sacks allowed in two-minute offense:

"I think that each sack has been a little bit different. So much goes into the O-line giving up the sack, but there's a lot that happens outside the framework of just the protection that leads to a sack. It can be the timing and rhythm of the play outside at receiver, guys getting to their spots and being at the appropriate depths. Certainly, there are schematic things that we want to make sure, especially in the known pass, to take care of, some of the tough rushers that you're going to have to face. Every week, there's going to be a handful of guys that you have to have a plan for. I think that it's us, as a team, on offense, executing better — all 11 guys, not just the O-line. I really thought that, offensively, up until those last two drives, we had really moved the ball the entire game. With that said, even the last drive, you gave yourself a chance on one of those passes to get down there and score. It's a good group of guys. Baltimore has an outstanding front, so we have to make sure that we're on the screws and that we have a really good plan and that 11 guys are playing together because they have a good defense."

On the Ravens' front seven defensively:

"They have a lot of people who can rush the passer. They have interior pass rush. They have outside pass rush. They have DBs and linebackers who can blitz. When you take just the front, they have an outstanding front, but then their two linebackers are as good as anybody in pro football right now. You have [Ravens ILB] Roquan [Smith] and [Ravens ILB] Patrick Queen, and then they have some DBs that can rush, too. You factor all that in and then you have a group that is dangerous. They've had the lead a lot in games, which gives you a chance to rush a lot, and they're capitalizing on those opportunities."

QUARTERBACK JUSTIN HERBERT

On 'adding a splint' to the middle finger of his left hand during last week's game:

"I think it was during a play, kind of banged it a little bit. So, just added the cast back on to make sure that it was safe."

On if he will wear that this week:

"I would probably imagine that we'll do the same thing, maybe the lighter version. Nothing too crazy, but just have something on there to be safe."

On which play it was that he 'banged up' his finger:

"On whatever play — I think that it might have been the scramble — at some point, it got hit. It didn't feel too good, so we added the cast back on, just to give it something to protect it in the game."

On how his finger feels:

"It feels much better. The mobility has been good. Iced it, just did my best to take care of it over the past couple of days. But, it has gotten better."

On 'dealing with degree of pain' in his finger 'for the rest of the season':

"It was trending in the right direction. I think just time is the biggest thing for injuries like that. Over the next couple of weeks, as long as it stays out of harm's way and we do a good job of taking care of it, especially with going into the treatment room and doing all of the things that we can, I think that it can get a lot better."

On scrambling and 'utilizing his legs' last week:

"It was just kind of one of those things that you take what you can get. You go through your reads and you realize that the defense did a good job of covering them. Whether it's pressure or whether it's just an open lane, you take off and go get a couple of yards, and hope for the best and maybe go get a first down. I thought the offensive line did a great job of protecting me and keeping those lanes open so that if things were covered downfield, I could be able to take off and get some yards."

On 'showing emotion' when spiking the ball following a delay of game:

"Football is an emotional game. It got the best of me. I apologized to [C] Will [Clapp], I apologized to the O-line for that outburst of frustration. I have to do a better job of getting the call in earlier, go through our reads. Whether I am killing the play or whether I'm keeping it up, we just have to have a faster pace of play there."

On two-minute offense as of late:

"I think that, as a team, it's always tough to let the defense down like that. When we get those opportunities, on offense, we'd love to go out there and go make those plays and go score and do something special for our team. As a quarterback, I'd love to do that, as well. It's really tough. Like you said, we haven't been that way, we haven't done what we would like to do out there. It's tough for us, but the only thing that we can focus on now is the next one. We're not going to let these past ones affect our next performance. Two-minute is one of those things that we practice all the time in camp and in practice [in the regular season]. We emphasize it all the time. We know that we have the right guys out there, we have the right scheme. It's just about executing, and we can do that."

On what 'prompted' the 'show of emotion':

"The delay of game."

On areas to improve in two-minute offense:

"To be honest, I think the offensive line has done a great job of protecting me. That's on me to get the ball out quicker. It's on me to flip the protection. It's on me to figure that out. I haven't done that. I can do a better job, as a quarterback, of getting the ball out, finding our quicks, finding our hots [routes] — especially if they are bringing pressure, having those quick answers that we've been able to do before. I know that we have the right guys out there, we have the right scheme. It's about executing. That's on us, as an offense, to correct those problems."

On 'reacting like that' following the delay of game penalty and if that has happened before:

"I think that was the first time I've gone through something like that."

On his reaction to the delay of game penalty:

"That was just the first experience that I've had with that."

On 'why' that was 'the first time reacting like that':

"I'm not sure."

On Sunday being the 'first time showing emotion during a game':

"I've showed some emotion out there in the game."

On showing emotion during a game:

"I think that football is just an emotional game."

On 'if reacting and showing emotion is a negative thing':

"I think there can be good things about it. Obviously, I apologized to Will [Clapp] and I never meant to put him in that position. I feel like, with our offense, everyone's comfortable with each other and we can talk to each other in a way that if something's not the way we want, I know that anyone can think can come up to me and talk to me and say, 'Hey, this is the way I want things, or this is the way it should be.' Having that ability to talk with your teammates like that, I think that helps your offense and I think that it helps your team. I know the offensive line, they're going to give me a hard time here and there [*laughter*]. But, I did it for the best of the team. I'd love to have that back and be able to control that a little bit better, but I think that it's important to speak up, especially when something is on your mind like that."

On WR Quentin Johnston:

"I think that Q [WR Quentin Johnston] is a fantastic receiver. He has all the confidence in the world. I could have given him a better ball. That's on me, as a quarterback, to be able to deliver a ball that he's able to run with, catch over the shoulder, and continue moving on. It's not on him, it's on me, too. It's on us, as an offense, to be able to execute in that position, where he's not having to be put in that position. We completed a bunch of passes today to him. He made some spectacular plays. That's the way things are going to be. He is going to come up, show up on Sunday and he is going to make plays. He's not going to let this last one affect his next one because if he does that, then he's not the player that I think he is. He's done a great job of handling all of this. I think very highly of him as an athlete, as a competitor. I know he'll be ready for Sunday."

On if he 'goes back' to a player immediately after a shortcoming:

"Depending on the situation in the game, if there is an opportunity to go back to a guy and kind of get him rolling, I think that's definitely a possibility. I think he's done such a great job of being confident and being that guy that I know this is not going to affect him."

On the Ravens' defense:

"They're very good. They're really well-coached. They have some really great guys on that side of the ball. They're flying around, they're doing a good job of forcing turnovers and getting after the passer."

SAFETY DERWIN JAMES JR.

On Ravens QB Lamar Jackson:

"Definitely a guy like that presents a challenge. He's an MVP-caliber player. We get a challenge in front of the world. We're going to see what we can do."

On playing closer to the line of scrimmage:

"I love that position, being closer. Being able to get in the action, sometimes. I'm a football player, man. I'll play anywhere, any position, but I definitely like being in the action."

On changes in the secondary:

"We realize that we have to compete and we have a job to do. Everyone is taking a chip on their shoulder and everyone is working hard to get it right. We want to get it right as a team and as a secondary, especially. We're going to get the best guys out there that are going to get it right, for sure."

On if changes began in practice:

"Everybody is working in. You can't really tell who's in, everybody is working."

On the Baltimore offense:

"They have great skill players. [Ravens WR] Odell [Beckham Jr.] and [Ravens WR] Zay [Flowers], they can get the ball, yards after catch. They have a good O-Line. Every week is a challenge. They're one of the top offenses in the league. We have to be ready to play, no matter who we're playing."

On if he was looking forward to playing Ravens TE Mark Andrews:

"Oh, definitely. Mark is my guy. We kind of came in the same year, the same agency. We've trained together. I definitely wanted to play my guy, Mark. I hope for a good recovery for him, too."

On replacing OLB Joey Bosa:

"It's hard to replace a guy like that, that caliber of player. I know we have great guys like [OLB] Tuli [Tuipulotu] and a lot of great, young rushers that are going to step in and do great, too."

On OLB Tuli Tuipulotu:

"I love him. Swag. He doesn't say too many words in the building, but he has a lot of swag energy when he plays. He lets his play do the talking. I like a guy like that, for sure."