



**Chargers Head Coach Brandon Staley – Media Availability – August 14, 2021**

**(On WR Josh Palmer)**

“He played out there tonight exactly how he's practiced for us since he got here in the springtime. He's had an outstanding camp. All of our quarterbacks really trust him. We can move him throughout the formation, and I think that that gives us a lot of flexibility in how we want to play. As you saw tonight, he can really separate and catch the contested catches. Plays really physically. And we're lucky to have him.”

**(On if Palmer got injured)**

“Yes, his contact popped out. Had to get his contact situated.”

**(On the 21-play drive to start the game and what he liked from the offense)**

“I really liked our operation. I liked getting in and out of the huddle. I liked getting in and out of personnel groupings. Thought we executed well. I thought (Offensive Coordinator) Joe (Lombardi) had a lot of pace in the calls, which allowed our guys to get up to the line of scrimmage and operate and identify the defense and go play the play. I felt like just our offensive line in that first drive I felt like we were coming off the football. Felt like our backs and receivers were working hard. And I felt like (QB) Chase (Daniel) was making good decisions. That's a big winning edge when you can possess the ball like that in a game. But the thing is we've got to finish it with a touchdown. And that's the takeaway. That's a long drive, and a lot of that is positive. But we have to score touchdowns in order to be the best people we face.”

**(On how much of an emphasis has that pace and tempo offensively been)**

“There's a lot of ways to define tempo. You're spot on. You can create tempo with literally how fast you play. And you can create it by going in and out of personnel groupings, which can apply a lot of pressure on the defense -- okay, who is in this game. Wanted to make that a big emphasis for this preseason, making sure our operation, we have a good, clean operation. And sometimes that can be challenging with how many people you're working with. But I was pleased offensively with how we played them.”

**(On OL Rashawn Slater)**

“Seemed like his wind was good. Felt like he certainly could have gone more than that. We felt like a 20-play drive, that's probably double or triple the amount we had for him. At least double the amount. And we felt like hey, that was a really positive drive. Got to see a lot of him. He was able to get that wind that we were hoping to gain today. And I'm glad that he wanted to go back out there. Because that means he's in good shape.”

**(On competition on the edge starters)**

“We kind of consider them co-starters, all four of those guys. We're very fortunate that way. And what we wanted to do – in (LB) Drue's (Tranquill) case specifically is, hey, miss an entire year, make sure he gets out there. We wanted to see those two guys play together. Because the big thing at linebacker, that's an attrition position. We wanted to see that kind of combination play together. I felt like those guys did a really good job in the first quarter directing traffic for our team, playing with good energy. I felt it was good for them to get out there as a combination. So felt that was positive. The same thing with (Edge) Kyler (Fackrell) and (Edge) Uchenna (Nwosu). We felt like those guys playing in combination with one another would be something that could be good for the evaluation process. And then both those two guys, they're different. And just kind of seeing exactly what their role is going to be for us. So I felt like that was a positive that all four of those guys got to play together tonight.”

**(On why DL Jerry Tillery didn't play today)**

"Yes, great question. A lot of it had to do with the Rams and how many players they were sitting today. I think they sat like 35 players. And so we just wanted to make sure that guys like (DL) Jerry (Tillery) and (QB) Justin (Herbert), guys we think are outstanding players in the league, that they were playing against the right people. And we just feel those guys are really valuable pieces for us. And we wanted them out there against the people. So we helped those two out. And the same with (G) Oday (Aboushi) and (G) Matt Feiler, the same circumstance with those guys.

**(On injuries, specifically RB Justin Jackson)**

"Yes, I think he's got a groin. Still to be determined. But wanted to be careful with him. Thought he found something and kind of shut him down. He had a good start to the football game, and I liked what I saw. We just shut him down."

**(On LS Cole Mazza)**

"We're still evaluating him. He's got a shoulder that we're taking a look."

**(On the running back group)**

"I felt like we were able to get those guys a lot of looks in the run game, which was important to us. I think you saw the value of the two backs later in the game. I thought (RB) Darius (Bradwell) had an incredible hit on special teams, which I was fired up about. And equally as exciting as their offensive contribution is where they are on special teams as well. We're proud of all three guys, they're competing hard for us and position. To see us be able to run the ball physicality at the end was exciting for us."

**(On if the fourth down was that something was just practicing situations for preseason games)**

"That was a green go for us, that was a practice, but go for us all the way. We felt it was the right amount, and then we felt like we had the right play call and then just felt like timing of the game get that first down, what it would do for us. Expect points after that. It felt like it would be a good situation to do it. And good practice like you said."

**(On how it felt coaching and calling plays)**

"Smooth operation. I really did. I've got such a great defensive staff that knows us so well, knows me so well. Once our series is over, (inaudible) and I talk right away and (inaudible) reruns the series with the staff. If I can have a moment to go talk to the defense, I certainly will. I did it several times tonight. But I had (Defensive Coordinator) Renaldo (Hill) help as defensive coordinator such a winning edge for me. First-time head coach, and being able to keep me where I need to be, which is my eyes on the field for all sides of the kicking game. Felt it was a good operation with myself, Joe, Derius, Nati, and I hope we get a lot better as we go.

**(On if the depth was tested tonight)**

"I really like the fourth quarter. It's important for us to be able to see everybody on the field today. I felt like in the fourth quarter we got to be able to see those guys that are competing so hard that have been practicing really well for us. And I felt that was what was exciting about the fourth quarter was seeing those guys really play their tails off and really play to our standard and being able to finish out the game on both sides of the ball; but defensively I was very proud of the way we played down there, red, give, takeaway, big counter for us."

**(On special teams)**

"I was really excited about kick-off coverage, punt coverage. They have the two-returner system that we're aware of. At times we had a gunner fall which led to a distortion in the coverage. And then the other one, obviously they got called back because they brought this in the back. But we had too many guys on the field. It's a tough job in special teams, guys, and then preseason being in and out. It's a really tough job. Really tough. And we had shut down (OLBO) Chris Rumph at halftime for special teams but he was going to play the second half on defense. Chris ended up staying out there, kind of misinterpreted what we told him, which was our fault, my fault. And we've got to take ownership because their offense went back out on the field there. But overall I think that our punt coverage unit needs to be better, especially seeing a different return system with two guys back there. I thought (P) Ty (Long) was exceptional punting the

football. I thought our protection units were good, but we have to do much better from a coverage standpoint.

**(On the kicking and rotation)**

"That's our preference. We prefer to keep Ty at punter. And let (K) Mike (Badgley) and (K) Tristan (Vizcaino) duke it out. And we wanted to make sure that evaluation is expressed fully. They have got shots kicking the ball off. That's a big part of it. So we're right at the beginning and we'll see what the next three weeks bring.

**(On what he saw from the defensive line)**

"I thought our inside guys – (DL) Giff Smith does such a great job with those guys. Those guys you mentioned specifically, I thought played physically in the run game. I have so much respect for that team and how they run the football. They're one of the premier run teams in the NFL. And I felt that Forrest, Breiden, those guys, Joe Graziano, I thought those guys were physical. That was our goal tonight, to be a line of scrimmage scheme, kind of establish our way of playing. I felt specifically inside, we could play better on the edge, but on the inside those guys really played at a high level."

**(On Trey Pipkens and Storm Norton and what did you see out of them)**

"I saw a lot of good things. And I saw some things we definitely need to correct a couple of times. The protection. And so it all ties together, quarterback, timing, receivers. As you guys know in the passing game there are many components to pressure. But I thought those guys handled themselves well. We had a false start, which we want to eliminate that, don't want to be pre-snap penalty operation. But those guys are doing well for us. And then they have to continue to take their game to another level. We'll play against a good front this week in San Francisco. And we'll be tested."

**(On what Rams Head Coach Sean McVay said after the game)**

"It's so brief. There's so much to say but so little time. But congratulations, and it was really great to see him and all the guys tonight. And I've got a lot of respect for that team. And it was good for our first test to be against a team like that."

**(On what he saw from CB John Brannon)**

"In that time and distance, the quarterback really comes alive in the down because you know it's do or die. So unfortunately we gave up an escape length to the quarterback. You've got to get reconnected and scramble drill, which is a big thing down there. We talk about it all the time. The best quarterbacks really come alive down there with their legs. He was able to get reconnected and kind of cut the route off there and just be there in time to save us. Really excited for him, because he's been working so hard. And he's got so far to go. But his heart, his spirit is right, and we're going to keep coaching him."



### **Chargers QB Easton Stick – Media Availability – August 14, 2021**

#### **(On how his first extended playing time in a while felt)**

“Yeah, it's been a while. Felt really good. It was a lot of fun. This building is pretty special. It's great to have fans back and have a little bit of energy in there and then just getting a chance to compete with the guys. We put so much work in since Coach got hired in January. And so to be able to go out there, play another team and do it together was a lot of fun.”

#### **(On how comfortable he felt in this offense)**

“Every day you get a little bit more comfortable. Today was a big step, I think doing it against somebody else, you're out there on your own, you're running the show. So day-by-day getting more comfortable. They've done a really good job, the plan they had this offseason during OTAs, finding a way to get everybody reps. They weren't full speed mentally or going through it. And then just the way we were practicing. They got us prepared and so feeling good about it.”

#### **(On if there was one play the he converted that gave him confidence)**

“Oh, a ton. We were pretty fired up in the huddle before that one, saying we've got to go get this thing and find a way to extend this drive and try to get points. So it was a lot of fun to see those guys get some movement and Larry (Rountree II), bust a good one there, and keep moving the football. That was huge for us.”

#### **(On the big completion down in the red zone)**

“No. The naked game was good for us. We were able to get some guys on the edge and try to spread the ball out. We just try to be efficient, and I thought we were as an offense. Obviously you'd love to get a few more chunk plays in there and get some explosives. But guys just stuck to the plan and battled it out. It was a lot of fun to see those guys up front get some movement and guys run hard.”

#### **(On his thoughts about the battle with Chase Daniel)**

“I love competing with Chase (Daniel). It's been great. He's been such a blessing, I think, to our quarterback room. Obviously being in the system for five or six years, his relationship with Joe (Lombardi), his relationship with Coach (Brandon) Staley has really been helpful to myself, especially. But I think Justin (Herbert) would tell you the same thing. Been a really good mentor for us. And so he was great tonight on the sideline helping me out. I really appreciate Chase what he brings to our room.”

#### **(On the practices with Niners and how they will impact him)**

“That will be cool, looking forward to it. Haven't had a chance to see how he (Trey Lance) did tonight but it was exciting to get his first action. I'm looking forward to seeing him. He's an awesome competitor, a really good friend, and I'm happy for everything that he's earned thus far. It will be cool to see him this week.”

#### **(On if he thinks he will get the first half and Chase (Daniel) will get the second half next game)**

“I couldn't tell you. We're just trying to get through this one and we'll go from there. But I trust Coach (Brandon) Staley, however it works out, it will be good. Biggest thing is going up there and competing and it just felt good to play again.”