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Chargers Week 9 Media Availability

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OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR JOE LOMBARDI

On if there were any significant similarities between the offense's performance over the last two games:

"I think that there were two different games. I thought that we were starting out pretty good against New England, then just a number of little things happened that added up to big things, whether it was a protection error on one drive or a drop on another drive. I felt like they were a little bit different. I felt terrible after both games, but I found the Baltimore game more frustrating, as far as just not being able to do anything. I thought that this last game, when you looked at it, there were just a lot of things that, easily, we can do better that would have made it a much different day."

On QB Justin Herbert's performance over the last two games:

"Some experience things that maybe could help him with the timing of some throws. His performance hasn't been something that I'm super disappointed in. I think that he's still on an upward trajectory. We feel good with where he is."

On if defensive 'disguises' have impacted Herbert's performance:

"Maybe in the Baltimore game. Timing is a good thing. A lot of times, when there's pressure, he's trying to be smart and not take sacks. You can get off rhythm a little bit when you're in that mode. It's not the whole game, but there were some critical points, maybe where he wishes that he was in a little bit more rhythm. Like I said, I think that we feel really good with where he is."

On overcoming 'potential frustrations' with dropped passes:

"You know that you have good players. You know that you're going to break out of it because those guys will perform. I don't think that we're going to have those kinds of drops consistently. I think that protection will hold up a little better on some other cases. It's weathering the storm a little bit, but keep working hard, preparing and maybe trying to find those patterns that you can fix, knowing that some other things can be random. Just being ready to get out there and work every day. Once it gets going, it'll get going."

On Patriots' pass rushers causing pressure:

"There wasn't, necessarily, guys coming free. It was pocket push or someone winning a one-on-one battle. It was more that. It wasn't an exotic blitz situation or anything of that nature, just crowded pockets that get you off rhythm."

On the how to prevent pressure caused by a pass rush:

"You can tilt your protections a little bit, as far as helping guys that need help, which we do. It's just being consistent. A lot of times, the pocket is good and everything works out fine. Other times, at critical moments, sometimes it breaks down. A lot of times, it's a technique issue. Like all of us, it's just coming to work every day and getting better on the details."

On the pass-catchers outside of WRs Keenan Allen and Mike Williams:

“Shoot, I think [RB] Austin [Ekeler] has been playing well. [TE] Jared [Cook] has had some big catches. I think guys have stepped up. When you have a couple of games like that, it’s a case of everyone needing to step up. I can’t look at any one guy and say, ‘Man, that guy hasn’t been stepping up as he should be.’”

On the tight ends group helping block:

“I think that they’ve done a good job. We use them a lot to chip the edges, so that helps the tackles a lot. They’ve been doing a good job of that. In the run game, they’ve been critical in some of those big runs. As a group, they have been doing well and they are getting better.”

On Williams’ prior knee injury:

“I think that his knee is fine. The Baltimore game, he didn’t practice that week. He had some opportunities this week and we just didn’t connect against New England. I don’t think that there has been a major change in the player from what you saw earlier in the year when he was having those big games to where he is right now. I think that it’s a small sample size. I think that he will get back on the stat sheet in a big way soon.”

On the challenge that the Philadelphia defense presents and playing at Lincoln Financial Field:

“It’s a tough place to play. They have rabid fans. That’s been well documented. They have a really good front four that can get pressure on you real quick. That’s a big concern. They’re a well-coached team that plays fast. There are some similarities between our defense and their defense. I think it starts with their front four and their pass rush.”

On the interception returned for a touchdown against the Patriots:

“I think that it was one of those where Justin [Herbert] was trying to avoid a sack and threw it a little bit earlier than Jared [Cook] was ready for. It was a good learning experience on that play. We pulled up a rep from when [New Orleans] played Miami in 2018 — almost the exact same situation. Luckily, the tight end got his head around and batted the ball so that it didn’t get intercepted. Just one of those lessons that, unfortunately, it wasn’t learned with an incompleteness, it was learned with an interception. It was mostly a timing issue.”

On how important C Corey Linsley has been to the offense:

“Huge. He’s such a professional. Smart. The things that he does — getting the run game identified, getting the guys blocking the right way — he’s been huge. One of those veteran presences that you can’t overestimate.”

On if the looks that the Eagles have presented thus far this season in the passing game are similar to how the Patriots defended the pass last week:

“Everyone has some carryover, from defense to defense. I would say that their coverage distribution is much different than what New England has shown on tape, anyway. What they have shown on tape is different than what you anticipated from New England. The coverages they run, the percentages — everyone runs man, everyone runs Cover 3, everyone runs Cover 2 and quarters coverage. There are different nuances within those and different percentages as far as how they deploy them. That’s what I mean by distribution. This team has a lot more shell, maybe, than New England generally does. They have it all. We’ll see how they decide to play us.”

On if Eagles CB Darius Slay is ‘underrated’:

“Yeah. I have some history with him. He was in Detroit. A really good athlete, guy that can catch the ball really well. He’s someone that we always felt very highly of in Detroit. I think that he is still playing at a high level.”

On G/T Michael Schofield III and T Storm Norton working through challenges and challenging blitz pick-up scenarios:

“They have had some rough reps, like everyone does. Some of them are back-to-back where, maybe, it looks worse than it is, but I think that those guys are battling. They’re professionals. They’re accountable. You’re trying to coach everyone up better and trying to keep everyone’s confidence up. We really like those guys, as far as men. You know what you’re going to get; they’re going to battle every week. They’re accountable for their performance. They’re guys that we’re glad to have.”

On if elements of the gameplan contain ‘pushing the ball down the field’ and if opposing defenses are ‘attempting to take that away’ from Herbert:

“I think that’s a big part of it. They know what he has. We’ve hit some of them. We’ve missed on others. We’ve had protection issues where, maybe, the ball gets checked down and/or they’re on top of the coverage and it gets checked down. I think a lot of that is run-game oriented, meaning he is throwing a flat route that is a yard down the field on a called run. Those are efficient plays. They may take his air yards down, which, who cares? It’s a successful play. To your point, I think that we’re always looking for ways to get the ball pushed down the field.”

DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR RENALDO HILL

On the run defense:

“We talked a lot over the bye week about alignments and techniques. We felt like it definitely showed in that ball game. It was the first step, and we just have to continue to improve from what we saw this past weekend. We have another good opponent — different style and way of running things, but we have to be prepared and ready to apply those techniques and fundamentals.”

On DL Justin Jones:

“His presence was felt early. He talked about once he got in there, he had to feel his way around a little bit. But he said, after a series or two, he felt good and was ready to roll. We always talk about the depth in each room, and we needed some depth up front. I think it allows other guys to be fresh. He’s a good communicator on the inside with the rest of those guys so we definitely felt his presence.”

On the Eagles run game:

“They made a point to run the football. Could that be their attack moving forward? I’m not sure. We just have to be prepared. We’re going to prepare for those runs we saw from the Lions game. We have to be prepared for what they’ve done in the past. They’ve showed that they can be explosive; they’ve got some big guys up front, some experienced guys up front. When you have both the quarterback element as well as the back included in that, it makes it tough. We have to cover all those bases in order for us to be solid against the run this week.”

On Eagles QB Jalen Hurts:

“Our biggest thing is continuing to be physical and play fast. If you’re a little bit hesitant on this guy, he’ll hurt you as well. We know we’re going to get some runs, he’s an elusive guy — a talented guy. We just have to make sure we minimize that as much as possible and not let the big explosions happen. We know it’s a challenge not only for the guys up front but making sure we do a good job with the back guys recognizing when he is out of the pocket.”

On the defensive scheme against mobile quarterbacks:

“When you’re facing a talented guy, you try to find those comparisons. But each guy is different — they have different ways of doing it. You had [Ravens QB] Lamar [Jackson] who’s an elusive joystick out on the perimeter. You have [Eagles QB Jalen] Hurts, who’s a strong runner, who can break tackles as well. It’s different comparisons in that aspect, but they’re all talented and we have to make sure we tie those guys into who they are with their physical traits. [Chiefs QB Patrick] Mahomes is another guy who can get on the perimeter and make things happen. But it’s all different — they’re all different and find ways to do it. The more and more experience we get with the quarterback runs helps us.”

On the secondary:

“We’re still figuring out through this week who’s going to be able to go and who’s not. But the guys that we have had in practices, we’ve asked them to be ready to step up at any time. A lot of those guys are talking about getting their rotation, anyway; it just adds a little more urgency to our group that they need to be ready to roll. If they are out there, we don’t expect anything different. Those guys prepare hard, and [Secondary] Coach [Derrick] Ansley and [Secondary Assistant] Coach Tom Donatell do a good job of getting those guys prepared.”

On the cornerback unit:

“We work all those guys at each position because we don’t know how it’s going to play out. A lot of those guys do play special teams, so being gassed off a special teams rep may add a guy playing outside or inside. It’s based on how we can rotate those guys and we’re going to see how those other guys are feeling after today to be able to see how we’ll move forward with our plan.”

On Hurts’ passing capabilities:

“When he’s in the pocket or out of the pocket, it’s a clean throw. He’s fluid with his arm, his deep balls are really good. He can put it on the line, and he gets there fast. But they tie in all of it; they tie in him moving in and out of the pocket. They tie in him staying in the pocket. He has some weapons on the outside, and he can get the ball to any of those guys, whether he’s in the pocket or outside. It’s going to be a tough game plan for this guy. He is talented, he’s doing a good job, and it’s just showing he’s on an incline since that last week performance.”

TIGHT END JARED COOK**On the offense:**

“I think it’s important for us to hone in on our fundamentals, the plays that we are letting get away. We can’t have that. We have to tighten up the screws a little bit and we have to be able to stay on the field — not get ourselves into third-and-longs, staying in third-and-manageable. Be able to keep the chains moving. Most importantly, when we’re in the red zone, we have to score points. Whether its three or seven — we always like seven — but the most important is that you have to score points to be able to stay in the game. Just finishing off drives when we are out there, I feel like is the most important thing.”

On ‘third-and-manageable’ and the impact that has on the offense:

“It’s just different things. We can be better in our runs, making more runs. Also, on our passing downs, making sure that we get completions instead of just taking incomplete passes from receivers, dropping the ball and what not. Receivers as a whole, not the individual group, doing all we can to help [QB] Justin [Herbert] to be able to manage the game better, as well as the OC [Offensive Coordinator Joe Lombardi]. On early downs, we have to be able to go out there and operate how we are supposed to.”

On the team’s mindset after two consecutive losses:

“We knew we probably should have had that one. New England had a great game plan, but we also felt like we played pretty well, minus some plays here and there. We’re all full of confidence, our heads are up. We just have to continue to go to work, we know we still have things to prove in this league to accomplish the goals that we set out to accomplish at the end of preseason and beginning of the year. We are continuing to strive to complete those goals. Everyone’s morale is up. Everyone knows the challenge ahead. We know that we play some tough football teams, so just continue the grind. It’s a long season, so you have to make it the best you can.”

On QB Justin Herbert’s interception that was returned for a touchdown:

“Stuff like that happens in the league all the time. Me and Justin just continue to work to stay on the same page. It was a tough break at a tough time during the game, but we’ll continue to learn from that and get better.”

On the offense’s performance over the last two games:

“Yeah, it’s a little frustrating. It’s always though, especially when you know that you have to put up a certain amount of points to compete in this league. The past two games, we haven’t been able to accomplish that. With the type of offense that we are, I’m pretty sure a lot of guys were frustrated in that room, offensively. But, you can’t let that stop you, you can’t let that get you down because each week is different. We know that we have to continue to score points. You have to be able to get in the box and be able to finish off drives with some type of points. Of course it’s frustrating, especially the Ravens game and this past game, but we know the talent on this team. That’s not something we are harping on, not something we are sitting here focusing on. We’ll fix it, we go out every Sunday and we go on to fix that week. From the week before, continue to grow and grow together, and grow to get better.”

On the opposing defensive coordinators:

“That’s not something we necessarily worry about, its more schemes and what the defense is trying to give you. We know that when we face a good DC or a coach that has a good defensive model, we have to be on our Ps and Qs. We know that the types of looks they are going to give are sometimes exotic or sometimes a little different. You just have to hone in and expect the unexpected. They are not always predictable, they play it safe and they play it smart, as well. We have to make sure that we are doing whatever we can to be able to get the upper advantage on coaches like that and defenses like that because the last two weeks, it’s not like they were doing anything different than what we thought. They came out and played exactly how we played it. It’s just on us to be able to go out there and know what they are playing, diagnosis it fast, be able to continue drives and be able to score points. That’s on us as an offense to be able to fix. We have to fix it.”

On QB Justin Herbert this season compared to last season:

“I wasn’t here last year with Justin, so I can’t compare the two situations. All I know is what is going on now, so it’s kind of tough for me to elaborate on that question. I just know he has a full plate, he has a lot on his plate and has a lot on his mind. I know he’s the type of player and type of guy who is going to go out there and give you everything he has each and every day to get you in the best position possible. I am not really worried about Justin, that’s probably the least of my worries. I know that he’s a gamer. I know he’s a baller. That’s not really something I think about or try to compare, last year to this year.”

On playing the Eagles at Lincoln Financial Field:

“It’s definitely a tough place to play, definitely loud and kind of rambunctious place. You just have to expect anything from the crowd and the fans, but that’s something we need to focus on and take them out of there early. As long as we are playing our type of ball, we can. From their defense, I’ve seen a lot of zone coverage, a lot of drop backs, kind of some exotic [cover] threes and exotic [cover] twos every now and then, but mostly [cover] three and a little bit of man. Of course, their front four can get after the passer and get back there fast. It’s important for us to help Justin [Herbert] get a little extra protection, as well as the whole line and for the receivers to be able to get out of their routes, which is going to be important this week. We have to make sure that we stop those guys in the front to be able to give him the time we need to be able to read, get our progression down and make passes down the field.”

On if he has talked about being a ‘seasoned player’ on a ‘younger team’:

“Not really, unless someone really asks me. I feel like that is kind of history, every team is different. How every team bounces back and the things that they go through is different each week and each game. You can try to put some similarities to it, or get someone to try and understand what you have been through before, but everything just plays out different in this league. No two games play out the same. Situations might be the same, but the games and the season are different. But, no, I haven’t.”