



**QUOTES**

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## **LOS ANGELES CHARGERS HEAD COACH ANTHONY LYNN**

### **Opening Statement:**

"Last night, that game was really a tale of two halves to be honest with you. I thought at halftime, our coaches did an outstanding job of making adjustments and the players went out and executed better. The biggest standout was third down [situations]. In the second half, we were 100 percent and they were 0 percent [on conversions]. I thought converting the ball on third downs helped our running game gain a rhythm a bit. When our running game can get into rhythm with our passing game, our offense can move the ball on anybody. We stayed in more third down and manageable situations and thought that also helped our defense rest up a little bit on the sidelines. I thought that was the biggest stat that stuck out, in my opinion."

### **On whether the team was in full-health on Sunday night:**

"There were some bumps and bruises, but pretty much — we were healthy, yes."

### **On if he said anything to galvanize the team coming out of halftime:**

"Not with this group. If you've been watching this football team, there is never an avalanche in full effect. These guys, they fight and play four quarters. What I thought at halftime was [there are] a bunch of men [who] didn't want to let the next man down. I think that's way more powerful than anything a coach can say. [Especially], when you have that [mindset] going on with a football team. I give them all of the credit."

### **On the mood of the locker room at halftime:**

"I mean, like I said, we were going over our adjustments. Coaches were doing a good job coaching guys up and making some changes. I thought the guys were locked in and were focused. We went out and just executed better in the second half. With this group, you don't have to throw tables or knock down water coolers to get them going. They knew. I could look in their eyes and I could tell these guys were ready to play. They [went] out and finished the game."

### **On any specific adjustments made to the secondary at halftime:**

"We had to [avoid] letting one guy beat us. [Steelers WR Antonio Brown] had over 100 yards receiving in the first half. So, we did some things differently coverage-wise in the second half that slowed him down. That opened it up for some other [receivers] to make plays possibly, but we wanted to make sure [Brown] wasn't making those plays."

### **On the status of RB Melvin Gordon III:**

"Day-by-day. His chances [to play] are better this week than they were last week. I saw him this morning and he's doing better. I don't want to put him out there too soon because we have a lot of football left [to play]."

### **On the decision to not travel Gordon III to Pittsburgh:**

"I think it's best, for a guy trying to [recover], to stay behind and rehab. You can do more [by staying behind], [as opposed to] traveling and trying to rehab in a hotel. To be here in our own facilities — that's what I felt was best for him."

### **On the mindset of the team following the win in Pittsburgh:**

"It's fun and it feels good. The guys are excited. You know, it's always exciting when you come back home after a win. When you do it in that fashion, it's [about the] confidence those guys have. They had it before, but the more you put yourself in that situation and prevail — it brings more and more confidence."

### **On the whether the win in Pittsburgh was considered a statement win:**

"I don't know if you can say it was a statement win. I don't know, it was a good win. I think the other four [wins] we had on the road previously were good wins too. I don't know."

**On the release of T Joe Barksdale:**

"There's not really [ever] a good time to do something like that, but at this point in time, we felt it [is something] best for Joe and best for the Chargers."

**On whether it was a tough decision to release Barksdale:**

"It's always tough when you bring players in and have to let them go. You know, I go through it all during training camp. It's my worst time of year at the end of training camp. So, yeah, it's always a tough decision."

**On RB Justin Jackson:**

"You can teach vision. You can work with a guy's footwork and his run-reads, but what Justin has — is instincts. That is something you cannot teach. He has better instincts than a lot of people would and that's why he's been so successful over his running back career."

**On when Jackson's instincts were first noticeable:**

"Well, when you study him, you [can] go back to his high school days where he was highly productive. He was [also] a 6,000-yard rusher in the Big Ten. He's been productive his whole life. [Not to say] that [the production] was going to stop in the NFL, but one of the reasons [that] he's been so productive is [his ability] to find the soft spots in the defense."

**On the game plan for Jackson:**

"It was really to be that tandem, complimentary, back to [RB] Austin Ekeler. We were going to use [Jackson] the whole time, but I wanted to get him going early in the second half because he didn't get much [playing time] in the first half. No one did, because we weren't running the ball that well. We made some adjustments in the second half [that Jackson] took full advantage of."

**On Jackson's limited use in the first half:**

"We had to do some things differently in our run game, schematically, before anyone would have success. That defense was playing on our side of the line of scrimmage. They were pressuring us and knocking us back. With Austin [Ekeler], on some of [his] plays — he had no chance."

**On RB Austin Ekeler's performance as the starting running back:**

"I see him being productive, as he has been all year, to be honest with you. I know the first half yesterday wasn't productive, but thought in the second half he was better. He's wearing down a little bit too. He plays special teams and is a core special teams guy for us. He's played a lot of running back for us. So, he's a little tired and you may see Justin [Jackson] play a little bit more — and you may see [RB Detrez] Newsome play some this week."

**On the consecutive offside penalties by the Pittsburgh Steelers on the last play of the game:**

"Well you know, if I was in their shoes, I probably would have done the same thing. They were jumping the count with their only chance [to avoid losing the game] was the block the kick. If you don't block the kick, [continuously jumping offsides] will disrupt the rhythm of the kicker. You can only do that a certain amount of times before the official calls the game, but they were pushing the envelope."

**On the effectiveness of the Chargers special teams unit:**

"It was good to see. We talked about [expecting] points from everybody. It was good to see the special teams [unit] to show up on the road and create some points. That was huge, but the punt we had blocked — that's an area that needs to be fixed. They took advantage of one of our rookies and showed the pressure that should have been picked up. We made a mistake there. I thought the special teams made up for it though. I thought they covered well all day. They kicked the game-winning field goal. They scored [as a] punt return unit. So, I was pleased overall with the special teams. That one [punt block situation], we need to get that fixed in punt protection."

**On CB Desmond King II's punt return for a touchdown:**

"It's always good blocking that helps, but Desmond has good vision. Desmond was an all-state running back in high school and went to the University of Iowa as a running back [and defensive back]. Eventually, they moved him to [defensive back], but Desmond [does] have running skills."

**On Barksdale's release:**

"We had a good conversation this morning. All I can say is that Joe's in a good place and we're in a good place. We wish him well."

**On the expectations of WR Dylan Cantrell following his move to the active roster:**

"You really can't [get everyone] involved [on game day]. He's waited and has worked hard all year. He's earned a spot to step up. If something happens [to another wide receiver], then we can move him right in [as opposed] to waiting [to then take] him off of the practice squad."

**On if Cantrell was promoted to protect him from other teams:**

"There's always that chance this time of year to lose guys off of practice squad. So, you do have to protect him that way."

**On the status of Offensive Coordinator Ken Whisenhunt and the reported interest from Georgia Tech:**

"We haven't talked much about it. His focus and concentration has been right here [with the Chargers]. I know there's a lot of interest [from Georgia Tech] and it wouldn't surprise me if it was his job to turn down. He's a heck of a football coach. That's his alma mater and there is some loyalty there, but they're going to be talking and not sure yet [as to when]."

**On whether there is a plan in place should Whisenhunt accept an offer by Georgia Tech:**

"Well, I don't know how those talks [between Whisenhunt and Georgia Tech] are going to go, but there is always a plan in place for sure. I don't know if they would want him to come now if he took the job or later, but right now we're focused on Cincinnati. He's over there [in our facility] grinding right now."

**On whether the Chargers are looking ahead to Kansas City in light of having three games in 10 days:**

"Kansas City is a common foe and we know them pretty well. Our primary focus is Cincinnati and will work on Kansas City after that [game]. We're on to Cincinnati right now."