



Chicago Bears Week 14 Media Availability

Sunday, December 14, 2025 – Soldier Field – Chicago, Ill.

CHICAGO BEARS HEAD COACH BEN JOHNSON

Opening Statement: “A couple injuries to note here, guys that did not finish the game. (WR) Luther (Burden III) has an ankle (injury) that we need to take a look at. Hopefully will have more information tomorrow. (LB) Amen (Ogbongbemiga) didn't finish. He had a hamstring (injury) that we'll see the severity tomorrow, as well. And then (WR) Rome (Odunze) had a little reaggravation of the foot, so we'll see where he's at, as well, going forward. Beyond that, in terms of the game, I thought the guys did a great job coming out and taking care of business.

We talked about that here this week. You come off a very highly emotional game the week before, and we ended up on the loss side of that one, and the easy thing to do is allow that to spiral out of control, and the guys didn't allow that to happen. They came back to work and handled the process really well. Like I said, they took care of business here this week. I thought the coolest thing about it, with the weather, those guys handled it extremely well, but to see our fans come out in full force like they did and really made an impact on that game, you could hear them, you could feel them out there, and I could tell that our opponent was struggling with the crowd. We're going to need that going forward. A couple more home games here this regular season, and we'll keep it moving.

I can't say enough good things here about our defense. I thought this was really an outstanding performance. I know we gave up a couple explosives that we'd like to have back, but outside of one or two plays, they really did a phenomenal job shutting down the run game, making it second-and-long, third-and-long, and getting off the field. When you combine that with the takeaways, once again, three takeaways there in the second half which were enormous for us, it really, I thought, carried the day for us.

Offensively, tough opponent. That's a really good defense. We talked about it being a top-three defense going into the week, and that proved to be the case. We had some success at times, but yet it wasn't as consistent as we would like it to be. Moved the ball somewhat well in the first half, but yeah, didn't capitalize with points the way we would have liked to, and into the second half we were able to find a couple more opportunities for points.

All in all, I thought it was a pretty good day. Special teams came through for us. (WR Devin) Duvernay had some big returns. Our kickoff unit once again showed why we believe they're a weapon for us, so that was really encouraging to see, as well. I'm going to open it up from there.”

On QB Caleb Williams' accuracy:

"Yeah, once again, I've got to go back and look at it. Sometimes my perspective doesn't always show that for me. But yeah, I thought he did a good job finding some open guys, and it didn't feel like we had a little bit more run after catch here this week than maybe what we've had over the last few weeks. Usually that's a good sign."

On if this game can 'propel' Williams:

"Once again, I've got to go back and look and see if that is the case. I know our completion percentage was maybe a tick higher than it's been, so that's a good thing. But we'll go back, we'll find out what we did well and what we need to clean up. There's a number of areas, you win a game 31-3 and yet there's still a number of areas where we need to address and we need to continue to get better as a team."

On the second touchdown to WR DJ Moore:

"It reminded me a little bit of – I think it was Philly that he threw it to OZ (WR Olamide Zaccheaus) in the back of the end zone, he was rolling to his right and we just barely missed. Similar type concept where he's rolling to his right, and he finds the guy on the back of the end zone behind him like that. I would say 99 percent of the quarterbacks you tell them don't even waste your time looking back there and trying to make that throw. There're usually bad things that happen. Yet he's got the ability to make that throw, and DJ made a heck of a play there right on the back line, as well. Yeah, that was one of those highlight moments there."

On Odunze's injury:

"Pregame reaggreated the foot, so we'll find out more tomorrow just the extent of that."

On his status going forward:

"We'll find out more tomorrow."

On if the injury is 'serious':

"I really don't know right now the extent of it. Something like that happens right before a game and you're solely focused on getting the next guy ready to perform at a high level."

On losing a player in pregame:

"I really don't process it. All I think about is what we need to do to win the game."

On the offensive line:

"I thought we did some good things, and then there was a couple that we wish we had back. You know, the false starts frustrate me a little bit. We're past that here at this point. Then we have a ball handling snafu there in the second half. That can't happen. Those are things that should be behind us now at this point. Those guys know that. They understand that. When you face these good defenses, these good teams, you really can't give them anything. You don't have any mulligans. Other than that, though, I do think those guys came out and battled. I think they were looking forward to the challenge. You talk about all week how fast the linebacking crew is that

we're going against and how you've got to take the proper angle, and then obviously they're defensive front, their get-off is something that's very difficult to simulate over the course of practice, so it can be a shock if you're not prepared for it, and I thought our guys handled it really well."

On 'setting the tone early in the week' that the team 'needed this game':

"Our guys understand it. They know where we are in the season. They know what's out in front of us, and they know how competitive the NFC is. It doesn't take much from the head coach at this point. They get it. I've been saying all along we've got some veteran leaders that they've been here, they've done that, they've won games, they've been close before, and so I think we got a really good big-picture view of where we are and where we're going and what we need to do in the here and the now."

On if 10 wins 'means anything':

"Not really. We're on to the next one. 10 is great, but it's not enough."

On LB D'Marco Jackson's interception:

"I think that was a game changer to me. You're always looking for a little bit to spark your team, ignite your team there, and in the second half that's really what it was. Correct me if I'm wrong, was the score 14-3 at that point? We really needed it because we were able to capitalize and make that into 21-3, and it felt like we took firm control of the game there at that point. He's done such a great job coming in at the end of training camp or whenever that was and picking up the defense. I know he had some familiarity there with DA (Defensive Coordinator Dennis Allen), but to go from a guy contributing on special teams to playing significant snaps at MIKE linebacker, I think that's a big credit to him."

On the teams 'readiness' for the next three games:

"We're definitely a better football team than we were that first month of the season, and probably these three opponents we're playing coming up, they're all going to say the same thing. At this point, I know we're a good football team. I know we're a good football team, and I'm looking forward to seeing this competition over the next three weeks, as they are. I think our players are excited to be in this spot they've put themselves in. We're 10-4 and we've got a lot to play for here over the next three weeks. Really in this league you can't ask for a lot more than that."

On WR DJ Moore:

"He's been playing this way every week. It's just we haven't been able to get the ball in his hands. We were able to target him a few more times, and he came through with some big plays for us. Sometimes these things come in bunches. You kind of have a dry spell, and then all of a sudden he could come on hot here over the next three games and just really take off. That's the way it tends to happen, which would be a good thing for us."

CHICAGO BEARS QB CALEB WILLIAMS

On Bears WR DJ Moore's second touchdown:

"It's what you call on those plays a 'hero post', and DJ did a good job beating his man. I actually tried to throw one to (Bears WR Olamide Zaccheaus) OZ versus the Eagles, so it's popped up. When you've got that much time, when you're rolling out and things like that, you peek those type of plays, and if he beats the defender the way he did, you throw it up -- not throw it up, but you throw it and give him a chance, and that's what he did. He beat his defender, beat the corner pretty bad, and all I had to do was throw a high back five is what we call it, back of the end zone, and he went up and made a great play for us in that moment, and it was needed."

On 'getting off to a 14-0 start' early in the game:

"Yeah, extremely important. You want to start the game off every week like that, but definitely this week. Not allowing them to get going, not allowing them to feel maybe some energy or feel they can -- that they can beat us, that's our mindset going into this game, and starting fast and kind of diminishing any thoughts that may pop up of positivity on their side, that's the mindset going into these games."

On his 'initial reads' on the second touchdown to Moore:

"Yeah, number one was (Bears TE) Cole (Kmet), and then he got taken down by the D-end, which is typically the guy that makes me get the ball out, so with that all that space, I ended up peeking my other receivers on the front side, other couple guys, and from there it's just seeing and feeling space, seeing nobody was in the end zone back there with DJ, and just gave him a good ball."

On 'the significance of that sequence':

"These are moments that I talk about and have talked about for a couple weeks now is when you get the interceptions or you get the turnovers and fumbles or whatever the case may be and you want to go down and score. It creates a sense of momentum for us, and it gets everybody in it. It gets everybody going, and that momentum is important to help us win games. Shifting energy, shifting momentum, shifting the points and things like that and adding one more possession for it is huge. That's something that we preach and something that we're going to keep harping on, something that we're going to keep growing at is when defense creates these turnovers, we've got to go score."

On if the second touchdown throw to Moore 'was in any way an ill-advised throw':

"No, I can make any throw."

On his accuracy and 'leading your receivers into open spaces':

"I've got to go back and watch the film. There were probably times where I could have done a better job maybe to (Bears WR) Luther (Burden III). I can't remember if it was before half or not. But threw it right past a backer and maybe I could have brought it up a little bit more so Luther could maybe catch it a little bit cleaner. It was the one he dropped going to the right. Maybe that was a little low. But a couple passes I feel like I did today, a couple passes I probably

could have did better. We're going to keep finding ways to get better and upping our chances of winning the game by finding completions, delivering good balls, runner footballs to the guys and allowing them to keep making these damn big plays for us.”

On the hit right before halftime:

“His shin hit me kind of like middle of my leg when I was going down. Like a bruise or contusion on it. That was really it.”

On how difficult it was playing in today’s conditions:

“We practice outside in this weather with no heaters, no benches, no anything, and so it's football weather, it's game day. You've got a lot of adrenaline. We've got the benches, the heaters, the jackets, which everybody does a good job with, and then you go out there and you get going and you forget about those things. This is Chicago. You either got drafted here or you came here, so you're expecting that when it comes down to these times of the year. It's an advantage to us, I would say.”

On how much ‘you are looking forward to that second match-up with the Packers’:

“Yeah, I'm excited. Ended up obviously throwing the pick, as everybody knows, in those last moments, and kind of let that off the hook throwing such a bad ball to Cole. I'm definitely excited. I'm excited for the moment. They're coming here, and it's another game for us. But I'm excited.”

On Bears RB D’Andre Swift’s second touchdown rush:

“Yeah, he ended up squeaking through there. I thought he was actually going to get tackled. There was a couple guys surrounding him, and he's a hell of a back for us. He made a really good play for us to put up seven points on the board. He squeaked through a couple arm tackles and made a great play. Super excited for him and for us.”

On being on a team that ‘can just take over and dominate’:

“Yeah, that's what we speak. That's what we preach. Offense, defense, special teams, the killer instinct and starting fast and all these different things. We've had some ups and downs, but I think we did a solid job with that this week of kind of not letting the other team get into it from all three phases. I think we need to keep that going. I think that we will, and I'm excited for that, to be able to help lead these guys in these moments.”

On if he ‘felt the importance of this game’ throughout the week:

“Yeah, I think we've done a good job overall this year, the focus, the preparation. Coach has done a hell of a job putting us in the right spots, and then us going out there and believing in the coaches and executing the plays, I think we've done a good job with that so far this year, and we've got to keep doing that and keep finding ways to get better overall just as a team. We left a lot out there, even though 31 points is -- whatever the case may be, there was a lot left out there, at least on the offensive side of the ball.”

On having ‘playoff caliber’ teams the rest of the way:

“Love it.”

On if he ‘feels like they are ready’ for the challenge:

“Yeah, I think we’re ready. We’ve played teams that have a bunch of wins. We’ve played teams that don’t. We’ve played close games. We’ve played games where we’ve beaten teams by a lot. We’ve played teams where we had to win with special teams, offense, defense, running the ball, whatever the case. I feel that we’re ready for just about anything, hot weather, cold weather, whatever the case may be. We’re going to go out there and fight. I do know that. I like our chances, us versus anybody.”

On his ‘ice cold’ celebration:

“It’s freezing cold, and it was -- it’s cold outside, rubbing my arms to warm up a little bit *(laughter)*.”

On if it comes from Premiere League Soccer Player Cole Palmer:

“Oh, Cole Palmer, yeah. I’ve seen some of his stuff, watched his ball, watched him play soccer, and he’s pretty good, and he’s done that celebration a few times, and Cole Palmer – ‘Cold Palmer’ is what they call him, and that inspiration kind of came from that a little bit.”

On the touchdown to Moore in the back of the endzone:

“That’s something that we’ve practiced that play so many times, and to be able to see it come to life and DJ run a great route – it actually did not work yesterday in practice, but we’ve repped it so many times that we’ve got so much faith and belief and trust. Coach made a great call, and DJ ran a great route. Just put the ball in the back of the end zone, let DJ go get it.”

On the play not working in practice:

“We ended up just falling down and running into each other, things like that. In those moments, it’s like, oh, Coach likes things to look a certain way, and it didn’t look that certain way. It was high on my totem pole for calls, but I’m happy he called it, and DJ did a great job.”

On play action:

“Yeah, I was told I couldn’t get under center and turn my back to the defense. I don’t know. I think the guys up front, they do a hell of a job for me, and it all goes into it, whether it’s the run game, pass game, play action, keeper, all of it goes into it in the sense of we make and we try to make and kind of take this advice from (PFHOF QB) Peyton (Manning) is you want to make your run game, your keeper and your play action game all look the same, so then it allows me to have more time. I call my O-linemen the Avengers. Then you’ve got those guys up front. They give me enough time with enough space with the receivers we’ve got and special talent we have. We’ll go make plays. When it’s not there, I think Coach trusts me to check the ball down or go make a play for us.”

CLEVELAND BROWNS HEAD COACH KEVIN STEFANSKI

On the start of the game:

“Yeah, ready to play. Obviously they had a good return coming out, and then we got backed up there. I felt like the player was on the line. I was not sure how that didn't get overturned, and we were backed up inside the 1, which is a tough place to start in a game against a good football team.”

On QB Shedeur Sanders:

“Yeah, challenging. I know it's incomplete until I can look at it obviously. I know there's things that we can do better. I know there's things that he can do better. We'll look at it.”

On evaluating Sanders with offensive line injuries:

“You won't hear excuses from us in terms of who's in there, not in there, those types of things. We trust the guys that are in there. We go to battle with those guys. So we have expectations regardless of who's in there.”

On if there was something wrong with Sanders' wristband:

“Yeah, there was a miscommunication early.”

On if there were ‘wrong plays’ on the wrist band:

“No. There was something -- I don't know if the wristband got something on it or whatever it was, but we got that fixed pretty quickly.”

On the interceptions:

“I'd rather look at it to give you a more informed answer. We know that team is good at taking the ball away, particularly intercepting the ball. So we'll learn from those.”

On the interception by Bears DB Jaylon Johnson:

“Obviously we're trying to make a play there in that moment, trying to get on the board. Their guy made a good play.”

On if Sanders is ‘still’ the starter for the rest of the season:

“Yes.”

On the cold weather:

“It was the same for both teams. I think you know what it was going into it. We deal with those elements. Crowd noise is the advantage that the home team has in a game like this.”

On special teams:

“We expect our guys to be able to go out there and perform in some of these situations, and we need to look at it and figure out ways to get guys on the ground and not having the ball coming

out. Obviously when you're playing in a game like this, you're playing a field position game, and we didn't put ourselves in a great spot early.”

On ‘calling more pass plays’:

“I would say game flow, game situation, those type of things, but all of us have to do a better job to get that run game going.”

On pass protection:

“Hard to give you a good answer right at this minute until I look at it, but they have a good pressure package. When you get in those pass downs, they do a good job with a lot of their looks, whether they bring guys or drop them, like you mentioned. So felt good about our plan. Obviously we'll look at it.”

On the communication between C Luke Wypler and Shedeur:

“I don't think communication was an issue with Luke and Shedeur. They seemed to be on the same page.”

On the pass where Sanders and WR Isaiah Bond ‘didn’t connect’:

“I wouldn't call it miscommunication. I don't know if he just didn't find the ball. I'm not sure.”

On if WR Cedric Tillman was a ‘full go’:

“He was cleared. Obviously just got to practice that Friday, so just want to be smart with guys who haven't practiced a ton in the week but knew he was available to us.”

On Sanders:

“I'm obviously thinking about just this game and those type of things. He's a young player that is making progress, like we've talked about all week. I see it in games. I get to see it in practice. There's going to be ups and downs to young players, particularly the quarterback position. So we'll learn from it, and we'll be better next week.”

On if being down early ‘limited what they could do’:

“I would give them credit. Obviously, they did a great job. We have to execute better in some areas.”

On if he has talked to Sanders about the ‘ups-and-downs’:

“Sure, you talk to your quarterback a lot about the opponent you're facing, what they're good at, things they're going to try to take away, but at the end of the day, you just have to focus on your development in each one of these games. He's fighting like crazy to help us win. Obviously we came up short. All of us, we came up short. You learn from it, and you apply those lessons in the future.”

On Bears QB Caleb Williams ‘moving around to avoid pressure’:

“We know he's as elusive as anyone is in the league. Obviously, they've designed plays for him to get outside the pocket, and he has ways of structure to get outside the pocket. The touchdown

pass he made running out of bounds is a really high level play for a quarterback. They do a nice job in their design on some of those keepers and the play actions, and then obviously he just has that ability to extend plays.”

CLEVELAND BROWNS QB SHEDEUR SANDERS

On his interceptions:

"I'd like to have the majority of plays back for sure. They did a good job. Shout out to their defensive coordinator, the team. They did a lot of great stuff."

On what it was like playing in cold conditions:

"The conditions are not really a big factor because thankfully to our staff, we've got everything to keep us warm. So everything went smooth."

On Browns WR Isaiah Bond's performance:

"Yeah, we've just got to use Isaiah more for his skill set, for what he's great at, and just keep evolving him overall as a player. I'm thankful to have him, thankful to be able to spend time with him."

On 'how you would evaluate where you are' compared to the beginning of the season:

"I think in every situation it's always going to be things that you want to work on, things that you want to get better. I think that's where I'm headed. I'm in the learning and understanding phase of this game and how things are."

On what the Bears did 'to create the pressure and get the three interceptions':

"They had a great defensive scheme. I enjoyed playing against them. I enjoyed playing in that. It was definitely a little challenge, so I look forward to learning from that and look forward to understanding exactly how things were on film and just be able to learn from it."

On the interception targeted to Browns WR Jerry Jeudy:

"It's going to happen. Like it is what it is. I'm not one to ever kick somebody down when he's down. He understands that's a big play. I'm sure he's hard on himself, so there's no need for me to be extra and do that."

On his wristband after the first two drives:

"No, the card just fell out. It fell out on the sideline. That was it."

On how he 'handles and processes' the 'ups and downs':

"I'm the same person regardless. I still got the same belief in myself. I definitely -- you know, like it is every week. You've got to get out there, learn from it, play better, and that's it."

On the mindset going into the second half:

"Really, going into the second half was, 'get things going and get rolling on offense.'"

On his connection with Jeudy:

"Yeah, every rep, everything is something to build off of. It's something that you have to continue to work at and learn and be able to understand. With each game, understand the different

speeds, understand talking to him about we got to play a little faster right here. It's just a lot of different variables you have to go into each game with. So, you've got to learn from them.”

On if it was ‘hard to hold onto the ball’:

“No. It was just hard for us to get into a rhythm. That’s all it was.”

On his assessment of his own game:

“We got a loss, so I didn't do good. That's what sums it up.”

On ‘third and long’ situations:

“Everything they (Bears) showed on film, we just failed to execute. That's it. That's on me. I've got to be able to get us in the right situations and get the ball out of my hand.”

On how cold weather games ‘impact you on the field’:

“I spent two years in Colorado, and it gets pretty cold in Mississippi at the back end of the year. It's the same.”

On what ‘you learned most from this game’:

“Biggest takeaway from the game, I've got to decompress and understand everything that just transpired for real. So, I just showered. I just did everything I could to get ready to come in here. I'll be able to watch it and be able to understand, but it's a lot of different things you could think and everything, but the main thing is decompress, chill, and be able to learn from it.”

On changes in the offensive line:

“That's nothing you can control. You can't look at that. You can't focus on that. That's uncontrollable thing. I'm sure everybody that went in and out, I'm sure they don't -- I'm sure they can't want to be hurt. So that's a part of life.”

On Browns Head Coach Kevin Stefanski ‘sticking with him after this game’:

“Yeah, well, he said that kind of last week. So I don't know.”

On if it helps ‘he’s not worried about losing your job’ after this game:

“You know what league we're in? You could lose your job at any point in time. You don't play with fear. When you live and play in fear, then you're not being yourself. So, I don't play or live in fear. Whatever situation I'm in, I'm in. Whatever happens, it happens. I live each moment and try to live each day to the fullest. So, never live in worry or fear.”

On ‘the biggest problem with the running game’:

“I'm not sure. Yeah, honestly, like I don't know how to answer that. I'm not sure. I think overall I just got to get us out of that situation, and that will open up the run.”