

January 18, 2006



An Interview With:

CHAMP BAILEY

Q. You talk about home-field advantage in Denver (how hard it is for the other team)?

CHAMP BAILEY: You've got that crowd noise, it's hard for them. For one, our defense doesn't have to worry about jumping off-sides as much. When you've got a lot of noise, offenses can't audible as much. It definitely worked and helped us out in the first game.

Q. Is Denver any different than playing in any other place or game you've played in? What makes it even more special that you've been able to roll off so many home wins?

CHAMP BAILEY: I think you kind of feed off the crowd. They definitely give me a lot of energy. When they are right behind you, pumping you up with everything they have got, it makes you want to play a little harder. When you feed off that, it definitely helps you win games.

Q. When you would go in there when you were not a Bronco, was it difficult to try to adjust to the atmosphere, the Mile High conditions, all that stuff?

CHAMP BAILEY: Oh, yeah. I think the first quarter is the toughest quarter. After that, you kind of get used to it and it's all about the game. If you don't think about it, later in the game you'll be fine, but the altitude definitely will affect you.

Q. What do you find as far as quarterbacks and the problems you have adjusting to the crowd noise, because you're looking in their eyes so much as a cornerback, what problems do you see them having?

CHAMP BAILEY: Getting audibles and checks to their receivers is the toughest thing. You can see last week a couple of times, Brady had to

call time-out because he really could not get the audibles in there. There were a couple throws he made that were in spots where receivers were supposed to be or where he thought they were supposed to be. Obviously they were on the wrong page for a number of plays, and I think that's due to crowd noise.

Q. What receiver in the Pittsburgh lineup worries you the most or could it be Heath Miller, the tight end?

CHAMP BAILEY: I tell you, he's definitely emerging as one of their go-to guys. And **Hines Ward** is always a threat and **Randle El**, you never know what he's going to do. If he catches the ball behind the line of scrimmage, you never know if he's going to throw it or run it. He's one of the quickest and fastest guys in this league, so he's definitely dangerous.

Q. A lot of people are surprise that had Mike Anderson has been able to come back and reclaim that starting position. Is he somebody that you guys had faith in coming into the season?

CHAMP BAILEY: Oh, yeah. When you see a guy like that works so hard in the off-season, you know good things are going to happen for him. For the last two off-seasons, he's been killing himself in the weight room and on the field running and conditioning. The guy looks like a specimen and he's ready to go every weekend. We're lucky to have him back and healthy. When he's healthy, he's definitely one of the best at what he does.

Q. How much of a lift did it give this team to see the Steelers beat Indy, knowing that would give you home field for the AFC Championship?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, we really don't care about who we play. But I tell you what, when you've got a chance to play at home, you definitely want the opportunity. It felt good to be able to stay home and not have to worry about traveling and all that stuff. Now all we have to do is worry about getting enough tickets for everybody.

...when all is said, we're done®

FastScripts® by ASAP Sports
t. 631.425.2701 f. 631.425.6116
Visit our archives at asapsports.com

C. Bailey 1.18.06.doc

Q. When you're about to play in a game of this magnitude, does your preparation to play that game change at all compared to a regular-season game or even a different level of playoff game?

CHAMP BAILEY: We went 13-3 this season and we did a lot of good things during the season. I see no reason to change what we do. If anything changes, it's just the team you prepare for.

Q. When you intercepted the pass against Troy Brown, Brady said that you made a great play on it, but on the replay it didn't look like one of your more athletic plays. It looked like the ball was sort of right there for you; that he didn't make a good throw.

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, whether it's right there or not, you've still got to catch it. He gave me the opportunity to make a play. You've got to jump on those opportunities. That's one of the things about Brady, he's not going to throw it up there a lot for you to pick it, so you'd better jump on it while you can.

Q. Talk about going against Hines Ward. You go back a long way, maybe the relationship that you have and playing against him this weekend?

CHAMP BAILEY: One thing you know is that when you cover him, you're going to have to make a lot of tackles because he's going to be correcting the linebackers and the safeties, and the corner is supposed to feed off of those.

So if you're not an attacking corner, you just don't line up on his side because he definitely is involved in the running game as much as the pass game.

Q. What kind of season has this been for you other than the hamstring problems you had midway through, are you pretty pleased with the way things have gone for you?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, I'm okay. Personally I think things turned out okay due to the injuries. I always expect more for myself, and right now the only thing I'm worried about now is getting this Super Bowl ring and moving on to the next level.

Q. What's the big difference between playing in Denver versus playing in Washington?

CHAMP BAILEY: The difference? Well, I think this organization is run different. I think there's a lot of stability here. When I left there, I had maybe four or five head coaches in five years and four or five defensive coordinators in five years. I really didn't like it. I liked the way that Washington tried to make things work. But around here, people have been around here forever. That's one thing I like about Denver.

Q. How much have the two rookie corners helped you guys out in the secondary this season? It seems like they have played pretty well.

CHAMP BAILEY: One thing about rookie corners, you didn't expect them to come and make an impact the way they have. We have asked them to do so many different things: **Darrent Williams** returning punts, starting games and **Domonique Foxworth** starting and he's been starting for last few weeks. They definitely carry their share but it's a lot for a rookie to handle, but they have handled it pretty well.

Q. How do you do you think Troy Polamalu compares to John Lynch?

CHAMP BAILEY: Compare? I tell you what, when I watch them play I notice Troy does a lot more than John Lynch on the field as far as moving around and getting in places where he can make plays. They definitely give him an opportunity to make a lot of plays. John, he knows everything, he studies the game very hard and he'll knock you out. Both of them will do that. I think Troy is definitely a John Lynch in the making. I can see him playing 13, 14 years and still being effective like John is.

Q. Are you also tired about hearing about how the officials handed you the game on Saturday?

CHAMP BAILEY: Yeah, oh well. We're still playing. I don't care how we got it. As long as you win, it doesn't matter how pretty it is.

Q. You're undefeated at home. Do you feel unbeatable there?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, I definitely do. I feel like we're unbeatable anywhere we play. If we

...when all is said, we're done®

play our game, do what we're capable of doing, there's nobody that can beat us. I mean, we just got to go out and play hard and not look back and just keep looking forward to the next thing.

Q. Do you feel cornerback is the toughest position to play in the NFL?

CHAMP BAILEY: I think so. Athletically, I think so. I think one thing about it, there's not a lot of mental things that go on. There are quite a bit, but not as much as a linebacker or a safety.

But when you're out there, you've definitely got to be a great athlete. You've got guys that are running 4.2, 4.3 at you. You never know when they are going to cut or stop or whatever. Being a corner, you've got to be a great athlete to even speak with some of these guys.

Q. Would you like to be a receiver yourself, have you ever been a star receiver?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, in college I caught a lot of balls. Obviously I have not caught many in the league.

Q. A lot of times you hear that a defensive back needs to have a short memory in this league for getting good or bad plays and staying with an even temperament, do you feel this is true, and if so, has it been easy or difficult for you to develop that skill?

CHAMP BAILEY: I don't think it's something you develop. It's almost like you have to be born with that. I know a lot of corners, not to say any names, but I played with some corners that just could not get over that last play. That's the only way you're going to kill yourself is if you dwell on the past and not focus on what's ahead of you.

If you look back at my career, I've had a lot of bad plays, even though I've had a lot of good ones. The only way I bounce back is because I forget about it.

Q. Although you guys knocked off the champions last week, do you feel that this team has to play an even better game this week in Pittsburgh?

CHAMP BAILEY: Definitely. I think if you don't improve your game from the week before, they are going to watch that and they are going to know how good we played. If you don't step it up a notch, then there's no reason to show up.

Q. You guys have not played the Steelers since they had Roethlisberger at quarterback, and you haven't currently played them in a long, long time. Is this tougher than playing a team you faced a couple months ago?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, it poses another challenge. The one thing about the Steelers, they don't try to trick you much. They will give you a few trick plays, but when they are in the offense and in their rhythm, they are coming right at you.

I think that that's not as difficult as preparing for someone like a **Peyton Manning** who tries to throw everything at you. At the same time, they are a tough football team, and have tough personnel. They have great players across the board.

Q. Does it take more than one big receiver for a team to be successful in post-season, not just your team, but any team?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, you can't say one guy is going to get you to where you need to go. Obviously, you've got to have a good quarterback to get him the ball and a line to protect him. There's not one player that can just do everything.

So I mean, if you've got a good receiver and a good supporting cast, he can definitely make plays to help you win, but I don't think he can do it all.

Q. How personally satisfying is this for you? You've been to a lot of Pro Bowls, but you've never been past the second round of the playoffs.

CHAMP BAILEY: We're going in the right direction, but I'm not satisfied until I get a ring. I don't care how far you get in the playoffs, nobody remembers you until you win the Super Bowl.

Obviously this is good up until this point, but I want things to be a lot better. I want that ring.

Q. Being a veteran, how do you feel about the young corner back from the Steelers, Ike Taylor, and the way he's progressed playing against great players week-in and week-out?

CHAMP BAILEY: He's had tough challenges all year. You watch him against Indy in the playoffs, he had Chad Johnson a couple times this year, he's had some tough match-ups, and I

...when all is said, we're done®

tell you what, he's held his own. I didn't know much about him until watching the Steelers this year, and he's definitely impressed me.

Q. Do you think you are still the top cornerback in the NFL, and if so, who else would you say is right up there with you?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, I definitely think I'm up in the top if not the top. I'll let you guys decide who is the best out there now. It really doesn't make any difference for me right now.

I tell you what, you look at **Ty Law** and what he's done after coming back from the injury that he had; you look at **Chris McAlister**, the way he plays, it's not all about numbers. You don't see **McAlister** with ten picks, but he holds his own. He makes a lot of plays.

Q. How much has what the defensive line has been able to do this year helped you out?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, in regards to who we have in there, we know we are going to get 100% out of them. These guys, have definitely adjusted well to coming in here and playing with new teammates. They play very hard every play and I watch them on film and they give me everything they have got.

Q. Why is this team better than last year's?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, I think it's more due to the secondary, I believe, because up front, those guys played well last year. I think last year, we just gave up too many big plays as a secondary.

This year, we had not given up a lot, a couple last week, but of course that didn't hurt us too bad. I think when you play together for a while and you know the guys around you, you know what to expect from them and you can try and adjust things on the run and that's what we've been able to do this year.

Q. You mention when you play *Peyton Manning*, he tries to throw at you a lot of things, but now you will face a more versatile offense that likes to run. Would you consider that your play would be a little bit more relaxed?

CHAMP BAILEY: No. Are you serious?

Q. If they establish the run, you will have to worry about the fact and the fact that they play action a lot.

CHAMP BAILEY: I don't know if you were listening a lot, but I said when you are covering a guy like **Hines Ward**, you have to support the run, and I know when he goes in, I'm going to have to come up and make a tackle. It's not like I'm going to be one-dimensional just covering passes all day. I'm going to have to come up and hit a running back every now and then.

Q. Everybody talks about John Lynch, but what has Nick Ferguson meant to the Broncos?

CHAMP BAILEY: You can try to go away from Lynch or me or whatever, but he's definitely held his own. You can't have a good year without having five picks. That's great to me for him to have his first year starting every game and the way he played. I'm really impressed.

Q. The way the Steelers had to finish just to get into the playoffs, in desperation mode for weeks, you guys have been real strong all season, what's the approach you guys are taking? Where they say they are desperate, do you say you've been rolling all year and you're poised going with the flow? How do you guys go into this game?

CHAMP BAILEY: I wouldn't say we've been going with the flow. I think we play the toughest division in football. There's no doubt that we've had our challenges all year. We've just been winning games. I would not say we've coasted into this thing. We've had some tough fights along the way.

Q. When you were in Washington you had more picks with Jake Plummer than anybody in the league, can you talk about those days to where he is now?

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, he's definitely a different person. I think you surround a good quarterback with good players, you're going to get good production from him. I don't think in Arizona he had near the talent that he has here. That's obvious reasons for improvement.

Q. Who did you idolize when you were a kid, if anybody?

...when all is said, we're done®

CHAMP BAILEY: A guy like **Walter Payton**.

Q. Why?

CHAMP BAILEY: Just every play, you got 110 percent, and that's the way I try to play.

Q. How many big plays do you expect out of yourself every given week? You said you expect a lot.

CHAMP BAILEY: Well, every ball that comes over there, I'd like to make a play on it one way or another. If I didn't, I'll just line up and try the next time.

Q. Can you talk about how you're being used in Denver compared to Washington and earlier in your career, is it a big difference in the way you're being used?

CHAMP BAILEY: Not necessarily. I just think that we have a different coaching staff and things like that. Things are a little different. We all have the same goals, trying to win games and they definitely put me in position to make plays. I mean, I've been like that my whole career. I can't say I haven't.

Q. Because of the roll that the Steelers have been on, what kind of team do you expect, a mentally tough team or a physically tough team?

CHAMP BAILEY: Both. Because they have been here. They were in this game last year, so it's not like they are new to it. They have a lot of experience on the offense and defense. And the offensive line is definitely one of the best you'll see in the game today. They are going to be tough across the board, mentally and physically.

Q. Some teams pretend that the altitude in Denver doesn't mean anything when they mean anything. Other teams being acknowledge that there say difference. I don't remember if you actually played in Denver before when you were in Washington, but can you just talk about what effect you find the altitude to have if you're unaccustomed to it?

CHAMP BAILEY: You notice it early in the game and of course it will jump on you again in the fourth quarter if you're not in shape. It's a tough place to play. I mean, you come here with the thin air, I know working out here when I first got here

was tough. But once you adjust to it, you're fine. But it's hard to adjust to it in three hours.

...when all is said, we're done®