

THE WASHINGTON COMMANDERS

21300 COACH GIBBS DR.
ASHBURN, VA 20147

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WASHINGTON COMMANDERS NAME **ERIC HENDERSON DEFENSIVE LINE COACH/RUN GAME** **COORDINATOR**

LOUDOUN COUNTY, Va. – The Washington Commanders announced today they have named Eric Henderson as the team’s defensive line coach/run game coordinator.

Henderson enters his first season in Washington, and seventh as an NFL coach. He spent the last two seasons at USC serving as the team’s co-defensive coordinator/run game coordinator/defensive line coach.

Henderson, a Super Bowl LVI champion, has a plethora of NFL and college coaching experience and has mentored several high-level defensive players. Throughout his time in the NFL, Henderson has worked with DT Aaron Donald, DT Kobie Turner, DE Leonard Floyd, DE Joey Bosa, and LB Melvin Ingram, all of whom had career seasons while with Henderson.

In 2025, USC had six players record at least three sacks and forced 12 fumbles on the year. LB Eric Gentry led all players the Big Ten with five forced fumbles. Henderson also mentored potential 2026 draft pick DE Anthony Lucas who had 21 tackles and 3.5 sacks in 2025.

Henderson made an impact in his first season with the Trojans. In 2024, USC allowed 24.1 points per game compared to 34.1 the previous season. USC also ranked second in the Big Ten in third down conversion percentage (33.5%), tied seventh in fumbles recovered (6), and eighth in the total interceptions (11).

Prior to his time at USC, Henderson spent five seasons (2019-2023) with the Los Angeles Rams as the defensive line coach/run game coordinator.

In 2023, Los Angeles’ run defense ranked 12th in the league in rushing yards per game (106.8) and had four players record at least six sacks on the year. Henderson worked closely with DT Aaron Donald and DT Kobie Turner, who combined for 17 sacks on the season. Donald earned his 10th

Pro Bowl honor following the season, and Turner was named a finalist for Defensive Rookie of the Year. Turner became just the fourth rookie defensive tackle to total at least nine sacks since 2000.

Henderson's unit ranked 13th in rushing yards allowed per game (115.1) and total rushing yards allowed (1,956) in 2022. Los Angeles also ranked 10th in the NFL with 12 rushing touchdowns on allowed on the season. DE Leonard Floyd tallied 9.0 sacks, 10 tackles for loss and a career high 22 quarterback hits.

In 2021, the Rams defense ranked third in sacks (50.0) and fifth in tackles for loss (85) during the regular season. Henderson also helped the Rams' defense finish fifth in yards per rush (3.96) and sixth in opponent rushing yards per game (103.2). The Rams' defense held opponents to a 51.8% red zone efficiency rate, which ranked eighth-best in the NFL. In the playoffs, the Rams tied a Super Bowl record with seven sacks in their 23-20 win over the Bengals at SoFi Stadium on Feb. 13 and had 12 overall during that postseason run.

After the season, Henderson was nationally recognized by winning the 2021 John Teerlinck Defensive Line Coach of the Year award, as voted by his peers.

In his second season in 2020, the Rams finished second in the league in sacks (53.0). The defensive front helped the No. 1 ranked defense finish third in the NFL in rush defense, while giving up the fewest points per game (18.5), passing yards per game (190.7) and total yards per game (281.9).

Under Henderson's tutelage, Rams DT Aaron Donald became the third player in league history to win Defensive Player of the Year three times. He was also named the PFWA Defensive Player of the Year award for the second time.

In Henderson's debut season in 2019, the Rams rushing defense allowed only 3.74 yards per rush, the sixth-best average in the league. This improvement marked a more than 1.0 yard per rush improvement from the 4.86 yards per rush allowed during the 2018 season, prior to Henderson's arrival.

Prior to coaching with the Rams, Henderson served as an assistant defensive line coach for the Chargers for the 2017 and 2018 seasons. During Henderson's first season with the Chargers in 2017, the defense finished fifth in the NFL in total sacks with 43.0. DE Joey Bosa ended the season with a career-high 12.5 sacks, which ranked seventh in the league.

Henderson spent the 2016 season at the University of Texas - San Antonio as the defensive line coach. The Roadrunners went on to play in the Gildan New Mexico Bowl against New Mexico. Henderson coached junior DE Marcus Davenport, who recorded a team-high 6.5 sacks and a program-record 8 QBHs during the 2016 season. Davenport went on to be the 2017 Conference USA Defensive Player of the Year and was selected No. 14 overall by the New Orleans Saints in the 2018 NFL Draft, the highest Roadrunner ever drafted and just the second draft selection ever from UTSA.

Prior to joining the Roadrunners, Henderson spent three seasons at Oklahoma State from 2013-15. He spent his first two years in Stillwater working as a graduate assistant before transitioning

to a defensive quality control coach in 2015. He was regarded as one of the Cowboys' top recruiters during his tenure. During his three years at Oklahoma State, the Cowboys posted a combined 27-12 record and made three bowl appearances. Henderson helped tutor DE Emmanuel Ogbah, who earned All-American accolades, was named 2015 Big 12 Conference Defensive Player of the Year and was drafted in the second round (32nd overall) by the Cleveland Browns.

Henderson began his coaching career in 2012 as a defensive assistant at Georgia Military College, where he coached the linebackers and secondary. The Bulldogs finished with a 7-4 record and made an appearance in the C.H.A.M.P.S. Heart of Texas Bowl.

From 2006-08 Henderson played in the National Football League with the Cincinnati Bengals after being signed as an undrafted free agent. He also spent three years (2009-11) with the Las Vegas Locomotives of the United Football League, helping the team win a pair of league championships.

Henderson was a three-time All-Atlantic Coast Conference defensive end at Georgia Tech from 2003-05. He set the school's career record for tackles for loss with 59.5 and finished with 175 tackles, 25 sacks (No. 4 in program history), 8 PBUs and 7 forced fumbles.

A native of New Orleans, Louisiana, Henderson earned a bachelor's degree in management from Georgia Tech and is working towards a master's degree in educational psychology. He and his wife Shamea married in 2021.

– Washington Commanders est. 1932 –