

June 9, 2026

Defensive Coordinator Daronte Jones

On early impressions:

“Yeah, I think I've been impressed with the way the guys are attacking. The intentionality's of what we're trying to get done, schematically as well as fundamentals and techniques. So, I've been impressed with that.”

On LB Sonny Styles:

“You know, he's still learning how to be a pro, which is great. But again, he's meeting every morning with [Linebackers Coach] Ken Norton and [Assistant Linebackers Coach] George Banko and the way he's looking at the game is good for us and we just want to continue and continue to build on his development as a player and as a linebacker and what we want him to do.”

On being a first-time coordinator:

“Well, I think to answer that question, yes, definitely excited about the opportunity. And again, I want to just continue to thank [Managing Partner] Josh Harris and the organization, [Head Coach] Dan Quinn and [General Manager] Adam Peters for giving the opportunity. But in terms of, you know, [Minnesota Vikings Defensive Coordinator] B-Flow [Brian Flores] has definitely been very instrumental in my background along with many others. And so, you're talking about the [Former Cincinnati Bengals Head Coach] Marvin Lewis, [Former Minnesota Vikings Co-Defensive Coordinator] Adam Zimmer, I mean, [Former Minnesota Vikings Head Coach] Mike Zimmer, [Denver Broncos Defensive Coordinator] Vance Joseph, [Baylor University Football Head Coach] Dave Aranda. Those guys have been very instrumental. So, I like to think you're pulling from a little bit of everyone and just your experiences as we all have done in our past with anything. You know, you take multiple classes in college, you're going to pull from all types of classes, you know what I mean? So, yes.”

On the team getting younger and faster:

“Well, obviously you see guys flying around and that's just the effort. You know, [Head] Coach Q [Dan Quinn] does a great job of the culture that he's built here. But the effort in guys, playing lights out and just giving all they got for their teammate, you can see that the brotherhood has been established there and guys playing for one another. And so, the ‘younger and faster’, I would honestly say, because of the culture that is here, even if you were older, you'll still be giving, all you got may not be as fast and do we have some older guys, but I like the mindset of you can see the speed on the field.”

On challenges he's gone through leading up to getting this role:

“Challenges, I would say, you know, Coach Q, Dan Quinn has been very supportive with resources I've been using as a resource. So, the challenge really with him and the staff that they've been given has been more of a collaborative atmosphere. And so, I wouldn't say a challenge. I think it's been,

the experience has been great, because you're constantly learning and in this profession that's what we want to do. So, it's very similar to experience in the past. But challenges, it's just more so getting us all in line. You know, when you talk about making sure you have 11 on the field, making sure the guys are lining up right with the right fronts, getting the calls, getting the communication across defensively, so everything matters. So, before we even run a play, it's the things that's leading up to that play. You know, elite communication guys looking at the situation. So, all that kind of, you know, dials in to, before we run like a cover two, what does our fundamentals with our techniques look like? The communication pre-snap and post snap. And so that's all part of it. So, I wouldn't say it's challenging, it's just you're looking at a wider spectrum of things.”

On CB Mike Sainristil and CB Amik Robertson Jr.:

“You know, they're, people refer to them as being very similar but they're different. They're different. They're similar in stature [laugh], but, no, they're two different players and they have different strengths. And our goal is to continue to use their strengths and kind of alleviate their weaknesses a little bit. But with Mikey, Mikey has ball history, you know, coming from Michigan and the things that he's done there, and he has inside, outside flex and Amik is a pit bull out there, as we know, he plays with a certain level of intensity. And so, those guys, you see them in the meeting room, they mesh very well with one another. They're like two peas in the pod. And so, that chemistry that they're building will help us grow and again, utilize our versatility on the defensive side of the ball.”

On CB Trey Amos:

“You know, Trey has been attacking everything that we put in front of him both mentally, physically, and so we're excited about where he is right now. And as he continues to grow to be an NFL football player and do the things we're asking him to do.”

On what he's focusing on leading up to the pre-training camp break:

“Well, everything we're starting from is really the the foundation of fundamentals and techniques and we are continuing to preach that as a staff. You know, this game comes down to eventually defeating blocks and tackling, right? I mean, it doesn't matter what you call, you got to get off a block, you got to make a tackle. And so, our guys understanding the fundamentals of that, the techniques that go with that is what we've been focusing on. Along with great effort, great effort, but we've also been preaching, getting to know your teammates, you know, the brotherhood is huge, knowing who's next to you and playing for that guy as well. So that's been our focus so far from a foundation piece.”

On the learning curve for a rookie with the responsibility of the green dot:

“Not so much as it used to be in the past, you know, for us, pretty much all the linebackers have the green dots because of the communication at practice. But nowadays that they have that ability to have the green.in college, you're going to see more and more college athletes coming to this level with comfort level of hearing a call, hearing the communication, and then echoing and getting that out to their teammates. And so, because of you know, where he's come from and his experience, it's been smooth as it can be for that.”

On where he's seen progress in versatility and adaptability:

“Well, with the multiple personnel groupings we've been having. You know, it's the guys that really attack the conceptual learning that we're asking of them. And, you know, when you're memorizing certain things and you're just trying to memorize what you have, you don't really understand the big

picture. And so having the different personnel groupings where, you know, you could be in a spot and he could be in that same spot the next play, and you guys have both being asked to do the same thing, it helps the versatility aspect. And so, guys are just learning this thing as, 'Hey, we're just X's on the field'. Let's just learn football. You know, not so much what I have, but let me just learn football because at the end of the day, this is our craft. And no difference in someone who's trying to get a PhD or their masters, they're trying to expend or extend their knowledge on their particular craft. And that's all we're doing. We're just trying to broaden our guys' horizons. You know, when you see the game differently, you start to see things differently. So, we wanted to make sure they're embracing that conceptual learning."

On if he has an idea of who will wear the green dot Week 1:

"No, it's still early. And we're fortunate enough to have this time and training camp to let that play out."

On what goes into the process of selecting a green dot:

"Well, one, it's based off of the communication, the ability to echo the call out to your teammates, but also, it's the personnel groupings, right? It's who's going to be on the field. And so, when you're talking about who that green dot can be, well, who's in the most packages? Who has earned that spot to be in the most packages? Because if you're in one package and he's off the field then you just lost your green dot, and you don't have a chance to switch helmets in series. And so, as we're getting to know what packages we want to be in, you know, who's in what packages, as we continue to build this thing here, that will play out based off of the guy's competition. You know, you know, that's the theme of what we do here, is competition. So, we have plenty of depth days to watch this competition play itself out. And then we'll know based off of the end of that, who's going to wear the green dot."

On what he knew about Robertson before coaching him now:

"I've seen him twice a year the last couple years at Detroit. And so, just his grit. You know, I watched him last year maybe the year before, I think was, I mean, he was solo against [Minnesota Vikings WR] Justin Jefferson. You know, anybody who have the confidence to do that and not blink is my type of guy. And that's the type of guy for the Washington Commanders. And so just that confidence level that he exudes, the temperament that he plays with that's everything that we're looking in looking for in terms of a Commanders."

On working with Cross after his stint with the Indianapolis Colts Defensive Coordinator Lou Anarumo:

"It's funny because you know, me and Lou we're very close and he also has been very instrumental in my development. I work with Lou in two places, Miami and in Cincinnati. And so there are some verbiage, there's some coaching points that I may say, and Nick would be like, 'Lou said that', or, you know, 'I can see where Lou got that from, or where you got that from'. And so, there's some similarities of course that helps speed up the learning curve a little bit."

On S Quan Martin:

"Well, I think Quan has experience that he's clearly shown so far. He has versatility from his background in college and he's in a place where he's also attacking the new scheme, not just lining up in the field, also playing in the boundary as well. So, as we continue to see what he does well within what we're asking him to do, I think, you know, the sky's the limit for him."

On coaching Styles without being overbearing:

“Well, it's all about learning the players. You know, building relationships here, building that brotherhood here with the commanders is not just a one-way street. So, it's not just a player-player, it's player to coach and coach to coach. And I think Ken Norton and George Banko have done a phenomenal job, bringing Sonny along, and that's to continue to build from that. And so, even myself getting to know Sonny, you know, having those conversations, not just about football, but outside of football, and I think that helps a person's growth more than throwing a lot at them, X's and O's wise and not understanding where it's all coming from. And we genuinely care about each other here in this building across the board. And I think that goes a long way before we can even get to that. He's funnier than you think [laugh].”

On what an attacking defense means:

“Honestly, it's about playing with fundamentals and techniques. I'm going to be honest with you that that's what it's about. I mean, defeating blocks, tackling, keeping the chunks off the tape, elite communication, all that goes into play. So, you know, to say we're an attack, and I wouldn't quite say we're an attacking defense but to say we're an attacking style defense, every defense is attacking. You know, no defense wants to sit back and just catch, right? So, that's what I'm talking about in terms of attacking. It's just playing with great fundamentals and techniques, guys playing with a certain level of physicality. It's all that we're looking for. So, my players often joke with me a little bit. There's a, I like to say football is a simple game, complicated by man, and we make it more difficult than what it has to be [laugh].”

On the challenges of installing a new defensive scheme:

“Well, I will say I take my hat off to not just [LB] Frankie [Luvu], but all the players that have been open, to learning different things. And you know how it is sometimes when you something new, there can be some resistance. And so, when I'm talking about how the guys are attacking the intentionality of what we're asking, that's part of it. And what we're asking is coming in with an open mind, being open to some things and being comfortable, being uncomfortable. And so, to ask those questions with Sonny or Frankie or whoever else, that's just embracing the big picture and the big scheme of things. And you never know what may be asked of you. You never know who may make the play. But if you're willing enough to learn, not just football, but it's in life, you know, how can we become better men, better husbands, better fathers, we're out. We're constantly growing. And so, using that same mindset into football is all we're asking guys do, and guys have been doing a great job at that.”

On S Will Harris:

“Will is one of our most veteran players in the back end. He's coming off of that injury as you know, he's, I know he came back a little bit last year, but Will brings a different dynamic because he's seen a lot of football. And so, you know, for him, at the end of the day, I've seen a lot of routes, concepts. For me it's more so getting the terminology down. That's going to be the biggest thing for most guys. Just the terminology because you know, this staff, this defense is, we got some experience out there. I know we're talking about young and physical and young and fast, but there are some guys on that football field that has played a lot of games. And so, we want to use that.”

On installing new terminology:

“Well that, that to me, that the terminology, whether it's mine or whoever, it's all one. And so, it's our Commander's terminology now, that's what it is. And so, when you do that, you know, it's if you're making a dish, you're pulling from different spices, different things and different categories.

And so that's all we're doing. So, you're pulling from my experiences with terminology or other places I've been at, and you just come to find out, you know, what here is different, you know, and the terminology here is our own terminology. So, we call things differently than I've called anywhere else. That's because I want our guys to have ownership of our own terminology.”