

September 17, 2026

Defensive Coordinator Daronte Jones

On his thoughts on their Week 1 performance:

"I thought the guys played hard. I thought they played with some physicality. You know, they tried to execute the plan to the best of their ability, and I thought the guys came out fast. I thought if you look at both the first half and the second half and was able to get stops immediately. Thought the guys played with great energy. Obviously, there were a lot of things to clean up on the tape, but it was a step in the, it was a step in a decent, it was okay. It was solid. It was solid. It was solid."

On correcting the missed plays by the defense to ensure it doesn't happen again:

"Yeah, well, I thought, like we talked to the guys, the game comes down to chunk plays, keeping the chunks off the tape and being successful and efficient on the weighty downs. And I thought that's where we lacked and we have to definitely improve on those situations. Having the awareness of the downer distance, discipline rush lanes, that's gonna help tremendously for us. In terms of keeping the chunks off the tape, that's just normally the premium players are. And then playing with, again, great technique, finishing plays is gonna be huge for us. Not assuming anything and playing until the end of the whistle."

On the plan for the LB position without LB Frankie Luvu and LB Jordan Magee going into Week 2:

"Once we get, you know, I know we've talked to the staff and once we talk about the injuries and how that may lay out, then we'll find, figure out the best fit for us and how to get our best 11 on the football field. If that's within that room or outside of that room, depending on who we have up."

On LB Sonny Styles' debut game performance:

"I thought Sonny was solid in his performance. I think, with anything, he had some things that he was really triggering downhill and some physicality showed up on his tape. There were some things that obviously he can improve on in terms of just the flow of the game, in terms of some run pass keys. But for the most part, I didn't think he flinched. I thought the moment was not too big for him. Was very pleased with his overall performance, but always there's room for improvement in that category."

On execution, communication and trust between the players:

"The communication aspect actually was pretty solid during the game. There weren't any miscommunications, so to speak, where guys were on different pages. That didn't really occur, so I was pleased with that, especially we're asking a lot from our guys to get us in and out of calls. So, I was really pleased with the way the linebackers and the safeties position pretty much handled that communication. In terms of the continuity, you know, a lot of guys, that was their first time on the field together. It was encouraging to see the brotherhood coming to life and the joy that they were experiencing when good things were happening on the tape, and then when some bad things

happened on the tape, no one divided, no decisiveness. And they just pulled together, 'Hey, don't worry about it. We'll get 'em on the next one.' And so the sidelines, or the interaction on the sidelines were very encouraging when you're just observing it."

On the front seven's pressure and run-gap discipline:

"Obviously, you know, [RB] Saquon [Barkley] is a special player and so, our goal was just try to build a wall with that and not to give him any seams because he can hit downhill fast and in a hurry, he can split the defenses. So, our discipline and our rush integrity in terms of trying to mug that look up for him, not give him clean looks, I thought the guys did that in a pretty sufficient standpoint. But we got one out. He had that crease, he missed a tackle and he went down the sideline and that almost became dangerous on that play. That was an explosive that we don't want on any phase of the game, whether on the ground or in the pass game. So, just continue to have the consistency play in and play out to limit those explosive plays."

On the game performance of S Jeremy Reaves and CB Amik Robertson:

"I was pleased with the, you know, we put a lot on Reavo's plate, and we asked him to communicate a lot and get guys lined up. I thought balancing that responsibility with his special team's responsibility still was huge for him. The numbers kind of spiked up for him a little bit in that regard, and I didn't think he batted the eye. At one point I said, 'Reavo, let me get you out, you know, in terms of you just came off special teams, you need to breathe.' He's like, 'You know, Coach, that's what offseason conditioning's for. I take my hat off to him. He's a true pro, love to coach the guy. I love who he is as a person, not only as a person and a player. And then Amik, I thought Amik battled. I thought he contested very well. I thought he challenged. I thought he showed some physicality out there. So, I think he's in a good head space right now.'"

On his own performance as a first-time defensive coordinator:

"Obviously, continue to try to stay ahead of the call and making sure you're putting the players in the right position is always key. It's all about the players first. Even before the game, I know some people had asked, you know, how does it feel? And my focus was on the players. So when you focus on them and having to make sure that they have everything that they need to be successful, anything regarding myself, emotionally, personally, that's put to the side. It was about the players, and they're the focus in this organization. So, we'll continue to do that and continue to stack that. But as a play caller, you know, there's always a play or two that, in my case, there were a couple that you would want back. From what I've told, that's gonna happen every game. There's gonna be a play or two that you want back."

On S Tyler Owens:

"Well, I think what you see, TO is at his best when he's running and hitting and that's what he does very well. And he's, like you said, he's a physical specimen, very fast, very physical. And then the football aspect of it is still very young in some of those things and raw for him. And so that just comes time on task. I see that no different than any other former players that I've come in contact with who made their livelihood in this league as a special teams player. And it took, for example, [Minnesota Vikings S] Josh Metellus, was a four-year special teams player before he even started some games. So sometimes it just takes guys a different length of time. And there's no right or wrong to that. I mean, he's still very valuable to this ball club and he has a huge impact on what he does for us. Whether he's contributing in the special teams aspect or in defensive aspect, you know, he's still contributing. And that's the biggest point of emphasis for him in his career."

On CB Rasul Douglas fitting into their defense:

“Yeah, ‘Sul’ brings experience. I mean, he’s a savvy vet. We know that he has play making ability. He has a knack for going to get the ball and seeing the ball out and break and with vision. His length comes into play. You can see on that, the third and five conversion with [Philadelphia Eagles WR] Devonte [Smith] down the sideline, it was a double move. He was able to recover, and his length has almost affected that play. It was a great throw and catch by Philadelphia Eagles by [QB] Jalen Hurts and Devonte, but you can see where his length can come into play a little bit. But his nature out there, his calmness, having the ability to calm guys down is huge for us. And anytime you have that savvy veteran presence is always encouraging.”

On how he’s coaching CB Mike Sainristil going into Week 2:

“Urgency. Playing until the whistle blows would be huge. That happened not only with the Mikey situation, it also happened in the last touchdown of the game. And regardless of what happened, we have to have the ability to respond. You know, play to the echo of the whistle. We talk about that there. And just to continue dialing on the techniques with Mikey. He wasn’t satisfied with the way he played and I don’t think anyone was, but yet and still, we know what he’s capable of, just like he is. And, continue to just, ‘Hey, man, focus on your fundamental, have your eyes in the right place, finish those plays, have a sense of urgency.’ And, he’ll bounce back because that’s the kind of player he is.”

On if he’s able to coach different players individually throughout the week:

“I think part of building those relationships, those unique relationships we talked about is, tapping into the players individually, as well as a collective unit. So, we have our unit meetings where you’re addressing the entire defense and so forth. And then, throughout that meeting, I may call on a specific player. After that meeting breaks, I may pull up a player aside or we’re talking as we’re walking down the hallway or we’re walking out to the field, or we’re on the field and I may pull him aside, ‘Hey, you may wanna look at this. They attack that way.’ Or, ‘This is a nugget that you may wanna put in your pocket.’ So I think part of that, and that’s something I was trying to be mindful of because I’ve, you know, you hear the stories, you’re kinda disconnected from those position rooms, right? But as a DB guy, former DB guy, I gotta be mindful not to just be over there in the DB room. I gotta kinda give all the other positions some love. And so, [LB] K’Lavon Chaisson definitely holds me accountable for that and him and Doff [LB Odafe Oweh] and now having DA [LB Dorance Armstrong], those guys are, they keep me in line with that.”

On their plan going up against a strong Dallas defense this week:

“Well, I would say the, you know, [WR] CeeDee Lamb and GP [WR George Pickens] over there, having faced them last year, to be honest, it doesn’t really matter what size players [are] out there. They’ve shown that they’ve dominated defensive backs in this league regardless of the size. That’s not like a one man job, so to speak, in terms of how we wanna handle that. So I think that’s a team effort, collective effort, that’s disguises, that’s the backend, that’s the linebacker, that’s the rush. Everything ties in well with trying to minimize the impact that CeeDee Lamb and George Pickens have on the game. And again, those are two special guys. They do two different things. They’re aligned in various places and GP is very dominant and dynamic with his yards after catch. CeeDee can make those toe tapping catches and he makes those phenomenal downfield, amazing catches. So having that ability and the guy who, the trigger man who’s throwing it to him with [Dallas Cowboys QB] Dak Prescott, we know what he’s done in this league and the numbers he’s put up and this offense is an explosive offense. Dating back to last year, they returning everyone back. So that task wouldn’t be left up to just one particular corner. That’s where the size, yeah, it could help

in certain ways, in certain packages, but overall, it's not so much about this matchup versus that matchup. It's the collective unit coming to forces with that."

On if there was a moment he felt the defense come together to attack in Week 1:

"I would be lying if I said that happened during the game. I think the way the first play, that first series started, that showed that the guys had the belief from the kickoff, you know? And that's always one thing that you're kinda concerned about or mindful of because with the first year defense, guys are still learning it, and you're talking about how things should play and how you're gonna get played in the preseason in training camp. But until they actually see it, you don't know what the belief is there. But I didn't feel that coming. I thought last week was a pretty good week of practice and you can feel the belief in practice. And so therefore when the game time started, there was not a doubt that these guys didn't believe."

On the impact he thinks DA will have being back:

"DA's a special player. You know, more than just a player having him back is more the leadership, and just that presence in the room, that presence on the sideline is huge for the unit. So I think more so than what he can bring on the field, it's more so him in the locker room, him on the sideline. It's gonna be very impactful for us, and so we're excited about that."

On when he notices a new scheme clicks with a team:

"In the past, it varies. You would like, as a goal, to be the first quarter of the season, in those first four games. Sometimes it happens faster like that, you know, that game three, because you're still working on some of the kinks. Sometimes you're trying to get the continuity together, especially if you have a lot of new guys. There are some things that goes into that, but definitely by the first quarter of the season, you have a good beat on, okay, this is who we are, this is how our guys respond and how they play. And then you can kinda build even from a staff perspective in terms of, I know I am in terms of, you watch these guys in practice and so forth like that, but also, we say practice or execution becomes game reality. How they respond in games, you kinda understand, okay, this player is better at that than I thought he was, so let's utilize him more in that way. Or he's not quite where we wanna be in that particular space, so let's keep him out of those spaces. I think by the first four games, you kinda have a better idea of the team and the defense as a whole."

On how he resolves situations where things don't go as planned on the field:

"Well, you want to assess first. Was it a player issue or a schematic issue? If it's a schematic issue, you may have to scrap it. If it's a player issue, or bad eyes or wrong hand or got reached on the run, then that's more so, okay, we can fix that right there. That's just a player specific deal. We can fix that. So, it's diagnosing what's the cause of it before you have to redirect."