

October 16, 2026

Defensive Coordinator Daronte Jones

On working through problems with the defense's second half performances this season and what he believes is preventing progress:

"Yeah, still evaluating that. I think, I can help the guys. I can help us with just calming them down with some calls. Some kind of, I'm not gonna say easy calls, but just where we can just line up and play. Taking that, removing that layer off of it and we just gotta continue to prove and just continue, continue to be consistent in some of the things we're asking and doing."

On if his system is asking for too much too soon:

"No, I think as the, as the game goes on and sometimes, in that situation, especially last week was different mentally because we were in a rally situation because we had the lead, whereas before guys were kind of pressing, felt they were pressing in a different situation. So, it was still a second half unfortunate situation that I take total, total accountability for. But it was more of a rally situation. And so now in that rally situation, sometimes when the guys are starting to move the ball, I could do a much better job letting the players know, 'hey, it's okay because we're up a couple scores, keep the ball in front, no big plays, we're okay with a three or four yard catch, just gotta rally make the tackle'. And just changing the mindset that way. And then as the ball is starting to move, let's just relax, calm down, and I can help them with the calls that way."

On if he believes the players are thinking too much out on the field is what's causing confusion:

"No, I think well, if you look at the first half and the second half, there's two different styles of play, right? And whether the calls or the techniques haven't changed, it's more so the, sometimes the situation of the game has changed. And so, I have to do a better job of we try to use the phrase or whatever to reset a little bit. And so, we talk about a mindset, a skill set, and now just to reset where we can just kind of calm things down. And I think it's, again, just slowing it down a little bit and being in the moment and not worried about the game, not worried about the score or anything like that or, 'oh my God, here it goes'. Just, let's just reset. Let's take a deep breath and let's just focus on our technique and our forward and our eye placement and just do those things that we were doing in the first half and getting back to that.'"

On what CB Trey Amos brings to the secondary and how him coming back will change the positioning of the corners:

"No, we're still working through the availability and all that. If he's gonna be available or not, we're still working through that and, but just Trey as an individual and his talent, obviously he has size, he can run, he has coverability. And so, Trey's a player who is still relatively young, right? And so, he hasn't played in a while, and so we're also mindful of that as well. And so, we just wanna make sure if he is available that we don't want him to be pressing to get back to where he left off. There's gonna be some grace with that. So, we just wanna make sure he just stay true to who he is. Don't

try to do too much to do your job and don't worry about anything else.”

On CB Amik Robertson’s pass interference penalty in the Week 5 game:

“Yeah, I, the coaching point with that is just better technique. Don't put those type of decisions in the hands of officials. And we can be better with our technique and eyes with that. And so, just keep pressing on the technique with that. I mean it happens, you know, in terms of throughout the play, especially on the back end where there's gonna be some hand fighting. We understand that. Regardless of how that play turned out, the ability to respond, which is what we talked about, is key. Yes.”

On Robertson’s overall performance this season:

“Amik's been steady. He's been steady. He's been a positive, shining light for us in the back end. And he's in a role that he really hasn't been in his career, in terms of a staple and he's been a starter and outside of starting because of injuries in the past. And so, I think he's owning that role and he's still growing in that role and he's understanding that sometimes people see you as who you were and not where you are. And so, he's just gotta continue to be mindful of that and continue to work his craft and just continue to take each day one step at a time.”

On balancing limiting explosive plays while not playing too soft with coverages:

“Yeah, it comes to urgency in the drops. Understanding the situation and how the situation can change what the coaches are accepting, kinda, if that makes sense. And so, regardless, we still have to be urgent in our drops, QB intent, ball out breaking, leverage tackle, not allowing the leaky yards. And so, we don't wanna, even though it's more vision based, what you saw in the [New York] Giants game, we don't wanna mistake that from soft or prevent defense. Like we still wanna challenge guys with that. So, there's still a challenge element in those vision spot drop coverages. So, the point of it playing 10 yards off is not what we would do if it was first in 10 in the first quarter, second quarter in that same particular coverage. And so, playing that same technique at seven, six yards off, whatever that may be, don't loosen or don't change it because you feel like, ‘okay, hey, it's fourth quarter. I wanna keep everything in front’. That now, that creates a prevent mindset. We still wanna be competitive in everything we do. And so just play your same technique from the same alignment that you were playing beforehand.”

On San Francisco QB Brock Purdy’s ability to avoid pressures:

“Well, I think, actually, Brock is very special. I mean, he throws a very talented deep ball. He's very accurate. He's very calm in that system. He knows where the ball should go, where the ball shouldn't go. And so, when it breaks down and he escapes, I think where he is different than some is some quarterbacks you're talking about when you get him off the spot, their efficiency goes down. He is not one of those guys. You get him off the spot, his efficiency increases. And so, he thrives on visual downfield availability. And so, if he has to get out of the pocket so that his vision can really open up those windows is that you can see that in his play. And so, we gotta be mindful of that. We gotta make sure we're aware of the danger that he is, not only in the pocket, but once he gets on the edges as well.”

On what makes San Francisco WR Mike Evans hard to cover:

“Oh, man. Mike's a vet. He's savvy. He's been around for a while. He has a large catch radius. He has the ability to go and high point the ball. So, what you were talking about, maybe a 50-50 jump ball really goes a little higher on the ratio when it comes to him because of his length, because of his size and his huge catch radius. And he can still body guys out. He can still run routes. He has a

unique way of getting open. I think he's very slippery for a guy that size, which is unique. And I think his route tree is beyond just verticals and fade balls. He can run in breakers, he can run underneath coverages, I mean, underneath routes as well. So, his route tree is expanded than most guys his size, which is why he's been around so long and still being very productive in this league."

On why there is a different kind of defensive style needed in the second half of a game versus in the first half:

"We're still evaluating. I mean, I guess when I say the style, I guess what I'm talking about is how it looks, in terms of the urgency, in terms of just the focus overall. And that's where I can help those guys with that. I can help these guys be better with the way I call it and putting them in better situations so that, to your point, it still shows up in terms of guys bursting to the ball and just finishing. And that's something we're working at in practice in terms of just finishing, taking the extra step, being consistent in what we do, my consistency with the calls, obviously, and me putting them in a better situation to if there's stress coming about, it's my job to eliminate that stress and to calm everyone down."

On how Amos returning would impact plans for CB Mike Sainristil and if he's thought about moving Sainristil to the safety position:

"No. Well, last week we had the, you probably saw Mikey on the, in the deep zones. The depth chart that we had in that game and who was available definitely had something to do with that. And that just shows you a testament of Mikey and how valuable he is in terms of we're just X's on the football field and understanding he too can do some techniques in the back end. And so, as this thing plays out and see what's our best 11, how can we manufacture that? How can we move some moving pieces around? So, when Trey comes back, if that's the case how many plays would he be, limited to that can play a part into it, which we still working through. And so, just the flexibility that Mikey gave us with that will make us better down the road."

On moments where he's seen exactly what he's wanted to see from the team's defense:

"Yes. Yes. I think and show the guys that, you know, like, 'hey, this is a great example of guys setting the edges, cutback players playing cut back. This is how you build a wall in the run game'. That showed up last week among other weeks as well. And then, 'hey guys, this is the same call. This is where we're at and this is not what it looks like'. And so just us growing as a, as a unit, and I think for the guys, and for us as a staff, like, it'd be one thing if we haven't seen what it should look like at this point. And I think that's where the frustrating part can be if you allow it to creep in that way, whereas we've shown it and we've shown that we can do it. It's just up to us to build that consistency to do it, play in and play out."

On DT Daron Payne's performance this season:

"Oh D-Payne has shown his leadership, and he's not a really vocal, vocal guy but when he does speak, guys listen. But the way he's playing, the way he's setting edges, the way he's coming off the ball and being involved in the run game has been huge for us. I think you can see his energy. He's playing with some energy out there, some enthusiasm, and I just love that about him. And so, we like where Daron Payne is. We like what he's bringing to us, especially at the physicality upfront, and we're gonna continue to lean on him."

On having DE Deatrich Wise Jr. back and what he's seen from him:

"It was fun to see Deatrich out there, you know? I haven't, outside of that practice that, getting him ready to go, that was the first time to watch him or be around him since I've been here, you know,

because of the spring and so forth. And you're just looking at him on tape and he's like, 'man, this guy's big, physical'. But to see him there and he looks like robocop with all the white padding and everything and he's, and the braces and but the power, the explosion that he brings, he's a massive man inside and I think his presence was known and felt in there when he was there."

On the plan to defend the San Francisco 49ers' moving offense:

"The key word you kept referring to is the moving parts, right? And this team obviously [San Francisco Head Coach] Kyle [Shanahan] does a phenomenal job over there and much like we try to have defensively where they're just X's on the football field, that is to its full display with the 49ers and how everyone can play different. They can have the same personnel grouping and give you totally different looks, but we've been stressing to our guys motion causes emotion and it's a lot of motion to expect that this week. They epitomize that and so our ability to have our feet in the ground, ready to go, communicate it early, me getting a call out to them as early as possible so our guys can be, can kind of see them break in the huddle and make our communication and just line up and play and understand it's not how they, it's not how they line up, it's how they wind up."

On maintaining gap discipline and an aggressing rush against Purdy to avoid giving him a route to escape:

"That's a challenge that we've faced with really every quarterback this, this year. We faced some good ones trying to have that plan. We gotta be coordinated rushes understanding working together in unison with the inside edge players as well. Just no individual, no, no hero ball. And that's what you gotta stress. Like we can't have four individual rushes. We have to have one unique team tandem rush to be coordinated and to contain that guy in the pocket."