

Southeastern Conference Football Media Days

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Vanderbilt Commodores Langston Patterson

Press Conference



Q. Can you tell us about your defensive coordinator and why you think the defense would be better this year?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: Yeah. So Coach Lea has taken over that defensive coordinator role. He's been a top three defensive coordinator since he was at Notre Dame, and he's one of the big reasons that I stayed at Vanderbilt, just being able to play for him and his defense.

He's really detailed it down and tightened up our structure into something that's awesome to play for. He puts emphasis on effort and he always says it's 50 percent what you do, 50 percent how you do it. I say it's 51 percent how you do it, 49 percent what you do. Not giving him all the credit.

But so he's going to put in a great plan and prep for the game super well. It's our job to go execute it. We have the players this year to do that and I'm super excited for what's to come this fall.

Q. Beyond your defensive coordinator, what have you seen this offseason that, what gives you confidence this defense is going to be improved?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: Started off with Coach Lea and Coach Simmons going out getting some of the best talent in the country. Some guys who can cover some of the best receivers in the country in the SEC. Recruiting some receivers who can go out and burn some secondaries. Super excited with the team we've got from the standpoint like a cultural standpoint. You see those guys they brought in just bought into the culture we have at Vanderbilt and showing up every day to attack and we're going to put a defense on the field this fall that you see is ready to attack and it's going to be a defense that's feared, that no one is going to want to go against because we're going to get after you play in play out. Just relentless effort and pursuit to the ball and just ready to attack whatever opponent's on the field.

Q. You have new offensive linemen coming in. What have you seen from them, going up against them in practice, what they bring?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: We're not in pads or anything yet until fall camp. But it's something that's awesome just to see that they brought in some really good O linemen who challenge the defense day in, day out, and just get us better.

That's one of the things we lacked last year was, like, going up against people that weren't getting us ready for the games or anything. We brought in people this year that are prepping us for our next opponent and going up against Chase Mitchell. We call him Big Globe; Steven Hubbard. Cade, going up against Gunnar. It's important we get that practice in because we're going to face really good offensive lines every week. It's really important that we see the same in practice.

Q. You mentioned your relationship with Coach Lea. For those not around the program, kind of just peel back the curtain, and what about Coach Lea makes him the right guy to turn Vanderbilt around and makes you want to play for him?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: That's a great question. That's the reason I ended up at Vanderbilt. I looked at Notre Dame. They were really high up on a school I wanted to go. And Coach Lea came here.

I was looking at UT, Notre Dame, all those, what you would say, high-profile college football teams. But when he came here and put the right staff together, we kind of built that relationship at Notre Dame and kind of kept on going, when he came to Vanderbilt. God opened and closed doors, and I know Vanderbilt is where He wants me and Vanderbilt is where I'm supposed to play, and a big part of that is because of Coach Lea and how I love to play for that guy.

He's someone that -- he's the only person at Vanderbilt that I think that wants the program to win more than I do.



Q. When you look at the positives from last season, all those small bright spots, what do you hope to build on this year with looking back at those?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: That's everything. It's getting one percent better every day. You see a team last year who could never close out any games and a team that often found at the end of the game, loss of the game. That's unacceptable. I'm a winner. That's always what I've done. I bet I haven't lost 10 games outside of my college career.

It's just really focusing on little details that it takes every day to win, and that's something that Coach Lea and the new staff that he's brought onboard, that's why we're changing that's why Vanderbilt is evolving and that's why we're getting better and it's building off of those highlights, because it's very hard to start from scratch, but being able to build off of those highlights like in the first half of the Georgia game, the Kentucky game, we're like halftime tied. But what we've got to do is finish. We've got to close and we've got to get one percent better every day.

Q. New offensive coordinator Tim Beck, what can you tell us about Vanderbilt's new offensive philosophy?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: I know that he's established something, him and Coach Kill together they've created something that's awesome, that's awesome to watch.

They're gritty. They're attacking every day and it's something that I've never seen offensively before, especially at the collegiate level of just guys who literally want to pummel the guys that are lining up against from them, snap in, snap out. It's so fun to watch because I thought we lacked grit last year on the offensive side, and you can finally see that old coaching style kind of be brought back on our offensive side and just how gritty and tough and mean they are up front, and it continues in the backside, like with our running backs and our receivers are wanting to block guys and pummel guys and you just don't see that anymore.

All you see in college football is people that just want the ball and want their touches and want touchdowns. But that's not what we're about. Our offense is going to do their part what it takes to win.

Q. How excited are you to play or to see the kind of stadium getting finished and on its way and to finally play in a complete stadium?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: We kind of say "stadium shmadium." We don't care where the ball is snapped. We just want to go out and play football. We want to be a team

that's respected in the SEC. We love to play the game no matter where it is. We don't need 106,000 people in the stadium; we just need for there to be a football and time on the clock.

But like last year, it was, you know, kind of a lot for it to just be a construction zone. But we used it to our advantage. Georgia probably didn't want to come in there with basically both ends of the stadium knocked out and they're kind of like, "What's this?"

It's our field and we take pride in that. Honestly, it was fun to watch teams come in and be like, "Where's the locker room; you don't even have an opposing locker room?" I think we stuck them out in the construction zone a little bit.

But we kind of just used that to our advantage. But this year the north end zone is going to be done and the south one will be done the following year, and it's up and coming.

I think it's something this year that teams are going to come in and it's kind of modern and it's really cool and it's first-class, and I think they will be impressed.

Q. Is there a particular game on the schedule that you're most looking forward to this year?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: Not really. I love to play football and just compete at every level. But you can't really turn down a night game at LSU. That game sounds pretty fun.

Q. With Texas and Oklahoma coming in, just, I guess, for a team just joining the SEC, what could they expect?

LANGSTON PATTERSON: I mean, one of my buddies said it to me, we were having a conversation just about the SEC and what it means, and the slogan, it just means more. It's a mini NFL. If you want to go play in the NFL, you come and play in the SEC.

I'm super excited for teams like Texas and Oklahoma who bring, you know, huge fan bases and just this awesome culture to college football, for them to take a step into the SEC.

For them there's no bye weeks this year. You've got to play Georgia. You've got to play UT. You've got to play Alabama. You've got to play Vandy. You've got to play Kentucky, Florida, every week. There's no off week.

Every single week, if you don't show up, you're losing. And it's something I'm super excited to see, just teams of that caliber joining the SEC and being challenged and seeing

how they respond.

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