

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

Coach DeMeco Ryans

Press Conference



DeMECO RYANS: We just have to bring awareness to it and understand the severity of the situation where a lot of kids unfortunately are losing their lives to something that's senseless, and we just want to make sure we're supporting it and getting out in front of us, and it means a lot to us as an organization. As I told our players, it's bigger than just being great football players. I want our guys to understand that we're more than just players. We're also great men, great leaders in our communities, and our guys are in support of it, and I'm proud of the way they represented from last year, seeing it from afar, all the way up until now.

Q. (On the rookies.)

DeMECO RYANS: Derek, he's doing a good job, as well. All the guys are working really hard, working really well with what they've been doing. They've been adapting to what we ask them to do. They've been improving, and they're competing each day, and Jesse is another young guy that we think has some promise to him. He's doing a good job. He just has to continue just like everybody else, just continue to be consistent, continue to try to improve daily. That's all we're looking for out of all our guys right now.

Q. Can you talk about the practices y'all have set up and the significance of them?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, excited to go against the Dolphins here ahead of our preseason game, the second week of preseason. I think we can get a lot out of joint practices, especially a team as good as Miami, a playoff team, a team that has a ton of playmakers offensively and a really good defense, as well.

It's a good opportunity for our offense to go against a different defensive structure. They're more of a three-down front where we're primarily a four-down front. So it's a chance for our offense to get different looks, and it's also a chance for us defensively to get different looks from different players and compete at a high level.

The Saints, as well, it's our neighbor close by, so it'll be fun

to go down and compete against the Saints.

Again, it's just different offense, different defensive structures, different philosophies there, so it's just good. As much as we can go against other people and not beat up on each other too much, it's a good opportunity for us to go against them. Dennis and Mike, two guys I respect really well in this league, have done a great job leading their teams, and so I'm excited to go to work with those guys.

Q. As a defensive player and coach your entire career, now that you're a head coach, is it any different for you to be involved with the offensive side of the ball, especially when you're out there?

DeMECO RYANS: It's a little different, but it's funny, having a conversation before practice with some of the quarterbacks, and CJ is like, is it only a good day if the defense does well, and I said, no, man, it's a great day when the offense is doing well and we're putting up points. We're all in this thing together.

It's fun being able to work both sides, being able to coach up and help the quarterbacks, help the offense, and also help the defenses just seeing it all come together. Just for me in this position, it's a role of service, and I'm just in position to help out either side of the ball as much as I can.

Q. You talked about the fact that you want to teach, educate. Benchmark wise, where do you think you are with the team and their progress if you had to give a grade at this point?

DeMECO RYANS: A+. We're doing great. (Laughter.) A+. We're right on track. We're doing great.

Q. With the joint practices, you've got a lot of young rookies, too. Was that part of the thought process of getting them multiple practices against players and teams --

DeMECO RYANS: The thought process behind joint practices just as a team, I think it's great when you can just go against something different, see different plays. When



you go against each other in training camp, you kind of get used to you know what plays the offense is running, you know the defenses that you're going to see. So when you can break up that month not at this of camp and go against someone else and get different looks, get different players to go against, it just helps you as a player to expand as a player, become a better player going against different. You may have different tails, different techniques that you have to use against these guys. So it's just good competition all the way across the board going against another team. Doesn't really matter, young players, older players, it really doesn't matter. I think it's just good collectively as a team when you can go out and compete against someone else.

Q. (Indiscernible) orange shirts and the reason behind it. What kind of got you to that point?

DeMECO RYANS: Yeah, I think personally, I did it for me. I've lost a cousin to gun violence, and unfortunately like a week ago another cousin of mine was shot, innocent bystander. So for me, it is personal, because it's near and dear to my heart because I've lost family. So it is touching, and it does hit home to me, as well as those in Uvalde, as well.

I think it also hits home when you have -- for me, I have three young kids. So when you send your kids off to school and you have to even have that thought in the back of my mind that man, are my kids going to be safe, am I going to see them, it's not the mindset you want to have when you're dropping your kids off at school.

For all of us, it's something we shouldn't have to worry about, it's something we shouldn't have to discuss, but it's here. We want to make sure we bring awareness to it because it is a real issue that hits home for a lot of people.

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