

Houston Texans Media Conference

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Jerry Hughes

Press Conference



Q. What do you like about the defensive scheme?

JERRY HUGHES: Just like the way DeMeco has us attacking off the ball, on the ball, just playing on the other team's line of scrimmage, just really taking that attack to them. We get to set edges, be more violent with our hands. A lot of technique work in this off-season which has been really great. We get to get back to the fundamental elements of playing football.

Q. What is the biggest difference schematically?

JERRY HUGHES: I get to attack the tackles a lot more. I get to be more hands on, using my hands. Things like that. It's not so much avoiding setting the edge. Here we encourage it. I think it takes out a lot of the guessing game of what the up front is going to do. It allows the guys on the back end to play a lot faster.

Q. What are your impressions of Anderson?

JERRY HUGHES: Just smart, tough, physical guy. That's something you really love to see early on where you have to pull him back versus encouraging him to kind of be aggressive, trying to get him to use different techniques.

He's here early, getting in with all the coaches. That's what you want to see from a young player, someone who is eager to learn and doing all the right things early on.

Q. What do you attribute your staying power to?

JERRY HUGHES: I mean, we got a really good staff here. What they do as far as in the kitchen, getting us to refuel our bodies, they're always giving us every bit of information to take as far as what to put in it.

Then the training staff, they do a fantastic job of any kind of bumps, bruising, tight muscles, whatever you name, they can work it out and fix it for you. I lean heavy on them because we got one of the best staffs here in the NFL. When you got that in-house, it's hard to kind of miss game days. That's really what you want to optimize.

Q. Still feel young?

JERRY HUGHES: Still feeling young, man. I don't know how. God is good. But still able to kind of move around with these young guys in this heat. It's been quite a blessing.

Q. Any specific trait that Will has that already stands out to you?

JERRY HUGHES: His intelligence. Just how smart he is as a young guy. Not afraid to sit in the front of the classroom, asking questions, be repetitive so he makes sure he understands what the coaches are asking him to go out there and perform and do. That's key. He has all of the physical tools to go out there understand be a freak of nature, wreak havoc for four quarters.

Now it's about mental, how can you attack opponents, keep them guessing what you're doing. Those are some of the best players in this league, is when people really can't get a read or beat on what you're going to do.

Q. Are you taking on a role helping him out?

JERRY HUGHES: Yeah, I mean, all the young guys honestly. Will is in our room. Dylan, Ollie. All those guys. I try to be there, big bro, whatever questions they have. I kind of seen it all in the NFL. On the field, off the field, I try to be there for those guys. They've been here the entire off-season giving it their all, asking questions. That's what we want. We need them to win games this year, so I'm excited.

Q. Does it make a difference to have a head coach how used to play in the NFL on the defensive side of the ball?

JERRY HUGHES: Absolutely. It's amazing how he can command the room by saying something as simple as going over situational football, how all eyes are locked in on him. Especially with us, we have a young team, that's what we need, someone who cannot only bring the energy but reinforce the game of football.



You can't learn enough of it. There's so many different situations that will happen throughout the season, things that have happened in the past that he's kind of going over. Just making us smarter so we can go out there and play faster.

Q. What are your first day impressions of the youth and veterans?

JERRY HUGHES: I mean, it was amazing just to see how vocal the team was. Normally when you got a young team, that's one of the things you harp on, we're not vocal enough, not able to move fast enough. That's not the case.

Peach is moving a step ahead of everyone at this time. Henry, Will, Dylan, those guys are vocal, asking questions. We're talking about technique throughout practice. It's not where we're wasting time. The minute we walk in this building, it's football on. You love that you got a young group of guys that are passionate about this game, who want to take their game to the next level. They're constantly on it day in, day out.

Q. (No microphone.)

JERRY HUGHES: I met Dylan last year at the spring game. He was wearing No. 98, so I figured go see who the guy is at TCU who is rocking my old number.

Another tall, tremendous athlete with a lot of upside, just kind of the way he is able to get off the ball, use size to his advantage.

Him, Ollie, those guys are going to be tremendous for us to have because we're going to need everybody in that room. By those guys being here all year, try to figure out as much as they can about this game. It's going to make us that better of a team when we have young guys that can fly around, play fast, be smart as well.

Q. What has improved defensively?

JERRY HUGHES: In the D-line room, our technique. I think that was probably one of our biggest things we were able to pin in and focus on. They want us to attack the ball more, be more hands on. We were able to accomplish that in the off-season because the philosophy changed. We're not trying to run around blocks any more. It's more so attacking. We got to be defenders, the aggressor. A lot of guys were excited to get back to, is kind of football.

Q. You have better talent, is that a way you've improved?

JERRY HUGHES: I would say that and we're probably faster. Guys are running around making plays. They have been with our strength staff here who has done a tremendous job of keeping everyone healthy. With that added element, guys are moving a lot faster.

Q. (Question about gambling.)

JERRY HUGHES: I think they're doing a great job of informing everyone in the off-season with PowerPoints and seminars. Coach DeMeco did a fantastic job during a team meeting. The more you get guys aware about it so they don't repeat the same mistakes.

Q. Look like you're starting over as a rookie again. Are you starting to see something different, can we expect something different this year?

JERRY HUGHES: Absolutely. I think you're see a lot more violent defense, guys that are flying around the ball. We got 11 hats coming after you. It's going to be something that a lot of people are going to be excited to see.

I know I am. I know the guys on defense are. We've just been perfecting it for these past couple of months. It's going to be really exciting.

Q. You mentioned the young players unafraid to ask questions. Is that part of a culture that you set or typical in the NFL?

JERRY HUGHES: I think just human nature in general. Normally when you get around a bunch of people and you're kind of new into that environment, you kind of tend to be more standoffish, kind of want to shrink down in the chair versus being more boastful, willing to ask questions, get it repeated so you make sure you understand it.

You'd be surprised, there's a lot more other people who need that understanding as well. When you have young guys doing that, that's great that you love to have.

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