

# Houston Texans Media Conference

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Houston, Texas, USA

## DeMeco Ryans

Press Conference



**Q. How are you approaching identifying who is going to rise to the top at wide receiver?**

DeMECO RYANS: Nothing to be determined now of who's rising to the top. All of those things will take care of themselves. We have a month of work, really good work against each other, then we get the opportunity to play some preseason games to see who are those guys that line up versus Baltimore.

**Q. You say football games are won in the trenches. Investment in the offensive line...**

DeMECO RYANS: The line is extremely important to me. That's how you win football games. Your defensive and offensive line, they have to be dominant, they have to dominate the line of scrimmage, we have to be able to stop the run defensively, we have to be able to run the ball offensively.

It all starts with the men that you have. The offensive line, they've been working. Credit to those guys. They're hard workers. They come every day, put in the work, detailed in their craft.

It's an exciting group to work with. We will see, as they continue to build and progress, we'll see how good we can be there.

**Q. Give us some sense of the qualitative and quantitative measures you're going to look for to determine whether or not you're getting to where you need to get to?**

DeMECO RYANS: Well, what I look at every day for our team to see where we're going, I tell our guys, we're competing with ourselves. We're not competing with someone else. You're not competing with the man next to you. You're competing with yourself.

If you show small, incremental improvements, marginal gains over time that consistently shows as a group, if everyone is doing that, then our group will continue to get

better.

It's all about gaining that 1% each and every day.

**Q. (Question regarding rookies.)**

DeMECO RYANS: I had a great opportunity over the summer to have a one on one with our entire rookie group. Spent an hour and a half to two hours with our rookies, allowing them to ask questions. I was able to answer any thoughts or questions, concerns they had. It was a very special moment, one I'll never forget, to have that intimate conversation with those guys so I could share my experiences as a player.

They asked, Why, coach? The main reason I wanted to implore to them is I do this because I care about them and want them to be as successful as they can be as young men.

If it's football, it's football. We're going to try to work our tails off to be the best we can be there. What I share and what's important to me is for them to be great husbands, fathers, great leaders in the community.

**Q. (Questions regarding expectations.)**

DeMECO RYANS: My expectations are how much better can we get each and every day. Expectations, they'll take care of themselves, right? Our team is still coming together. We're still trying to identify who our team will be, right? There's a lot of competition that has to go on. We'll see where we are.

Expectations, it really doesn't matter because it's about every guy going out and being their best and collectively as a group we'll be exactly where we should be.

**Q. What is the balance in your defense making sure the offense gets going?**

DeMECO RYANS: Being a head coach, I'm responsible for it all. It's offense, defense, special teams. I don't just turn my eye to the offense or the special teams, right? I make sure I'm available to assist and help out to see how



their progress is going on all three phases of the game, not just offense and defense, sometimes forget about the special teams.

But Frank, Bobby, those guys are doing an outstanding job with their units.

**Q. Talking about the intimacy you had with the rookies, how important is that in their development?**

DeMECO RYANS: One thing with rookies, there's a lot on their plates. They have to come in and they have to adapt very quickly to situations that is new to them, right?

It's not just me. It means a lot to me because I care about the guys, first and foremost, as people, as men. But it's also have a great group of veteran guys like we have, those veterans being able to take the rookies to the side and explain some of their pitfalls or some things to watch out for as they go along the way so they don't have to go through the same mistakes.

**Q. What are your hopes and expectations for Steve Nelson now that he's here? What were the conversations that led to this point?**

DeMECO RYANS: It's great to have Steve here. Steve has been in our mini camp. It's great to have him here. Great presence. He came in, he's a worker. I'm excited to work with Steven. Think he's going to be a really important piece to what we're doing. Thankful to have him here.

**Q. When you go around town and you talk to fans, even though the team hasn't done well the past three years, do you notice an excitement or difference?**

DeMECO RYANS: Going around town here in Houston, I mean, there's excitement in the city, right? I sense that excitement. I feel it from our fans. Any time I'm able to interact with our fans, which is very important to me to be able to interact with the fans, because they're the people who drive and promote our game.

I'm thankful for the support of our fans here in Houston. They're fired up. Every time I see someone, they're excited. They're encouraging to me. They lift me up, right, because I see there's hope.

I just want to be able to continue to spurn that hope, drive it along. When we play games at NRG, I want to see that same support for our fans and have it packed out because it means a lot to us.

**Q. When you entered, the team was on the rise. Do you draw similarities to that team and the team you're**

**trying to build now?**

DeMECO RYANS: That's a good question (smiling).

I think the thing I would say similarities is, when I first came in as a rookie, Coach Gary Kubiak, great coach, first year taking over. There was a lot of change, right? You have to implement your style of play, how you want to play, how you want guys to prepare. It takes time to implement and put your imprint on the team.

One thing I remember, the temperature definitely hasn't changed from 2006 (smiling). Still hot, tough practices in Houston. Things a lot of other teams don't have to deal with. Those outside factors.

It's about men coming out, doing their best, working hard. Similarities from 2006 to here in 2003, still a bunch of hungry young men who are looking to go out and look their best for the city of H Town.

**Q. (Question regarding play calling.)**

DeMECO RYANS: Right now with the play calling and those things, I'll start off calling the plays and we'll see how that goes.

**Q. You mentioned meeting with the rookies over the summer. Were there any kind of first-time ideas beyond that that now you're a head coach you get to implement, work with the team in training camp?**

DeMECO RYANS: I mean, with me meeting with the rookies, that was just me letting those guys know at the end of the day I care about them. That's what is the most important thing that came out of that meeting.

**Q. The offensive line, how do you see that group kind of come together? What are you most excited about that group?**

DeMECO RYANS: With our offensive line, it's all of the guys just being able to gel together, right? The best offensive lines, they work in sync, right? They work as one, right? It takes time to develop that, that chemistry amongst our group.

Now to have the guys back, each and every day let's see how much can that chemistry improve, how tighter can these guys get to where they're in sync and operating as one.

They're doing an excellent job of protecting in the passing game, but also being able to knock guys off the line of scrimmage and reset the line of scrimmage in the run

game.

I'm excited about the group. We have really good guys there who are dedicated to their craft.

**Q. The philosophy of building a team, start up front?**

DeMECO RYANS: No doubt. That's my philosophy of team building. It all starts up front. If you can't win the line of scrimmage, it's going to be hard to win games.

Thank you, guys.

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