

Chargers Defensive Coordinator Derrick Ansley Media Availability

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 ⚡ Hoag Performance Center ⚡ Costa Mesa, Calif.

On his promotion to defensive coordinator:

“I don’t think words can describe how I feel about this opportunity. You guys know how I feel about [Head] Coach [Brandon] Staley, our relationship goes way back. I’m thankful to the organization – the Spanos Family, [General Manager] Tom [Telesco], Brandon [Staley] – for believing in me and giving me this opportunity to lead the defensive unit this year, in 2023, and beyond.”

On the timeline of his promotion:

“Like you guys know, things happen fast in this NFL. When things happen, you have to be ready to adjust on the fly. Coach [Renaldo] Hill had the opportunity to go to Miami. Over the next couple of days, things worked out to where I got an opportunity to get involved in the job. Coach Staley believed in me after we interviewed a couple of guys, and the rest is history.”

On the outlook for the defense heading into the offseason and next season:

“We’re not looking in the past, we’re going to keep our lens forward. Obviously, the first two years, we had some growing pains. We also did some good things, as well. In 2023, we’re going to focus on all 11 guys playing as one, just as we had the first two years. We’re going to put guys into positions to make plays, coach guys hard, play to our standard, our way, and get the results that we need.”

On his vision for the defensive coordinator role:

“The first thing is to be an extension of Coach Staley, be a support staff for him – making sure that whatever he needs on a day-to-day basis, a weekly basis, on gameday, post-gameday, to make sure that he can do his job at a high level and be another set of eyes to support him and his vision of the defense through the way that we see it, just be an extra set our hands. Also, coach our guys, like we’ve been doing. Nothing will change in the identification factor of the players, coaching them and developing them like we’ve been for the first two years.”

On S Derwin James Jr. congratulating him on Twitter:

“He definitely is the leader. He’s the heartbeat of our defense, of our secondary, even our team. He’s the mentality that walks around the building, always in an upbeat spirit. For him to sign-off on that, it’s a testament to our relationship. We’ve had a great relationship since Day 1. I’ve known him for a while, going back to college. He’s been the same guy every single day. That brought some excitement to me, seeing him do that.”

On Tom Donatell's promotion to Passing Game Coordinator/Secondary:

"Well-deserved, well-deserved. Tommy is sharp. He's a guy whose arrow is on the up rise. He's very professional, very knowledgeable on the backend and the front. This promotion was warranted. We all know what we have in him, the organization knows what they have in him. It's awesome to see a guy work his way up through the organization and get an opportunity to be successful."

On his prior experience as a defensive coordinator at the collegiate level and the difference in transitioning to the same role in the NFL:

"I don't think that it's a huge difference. Playing football is all about relationships – player-to-coach, coach-to-player. Players just want you to be real with them, no matter if that's at the college level or the pro game. Give them the information that they need to be successful. I guess the biggest difference is that there is no class in the NFL, there's no school, it's all football."

On developing relationships with players outside of the secondary:

"Those things have been a work-in-progress over the first two years. That's one thing that Coach Staley preaches, that he wants coaches to touch the whole team. As position coaches, we coach special teams guys, as well, with [Special Teams Coordinator] Coach [Ryan] Ficken, in some aspects of our roles. Those things won't change, our relationships with all of those guys. If anything, they're intensified moving forward."

On the best advice he has received in his coaching career:

"[Alabama Head] Coach [Nick] Saban, when I was a GA in 2011, I had an opportunity to get my first full-time job at UCF, and that job came pretty quickly, but as I got on that job, there was another job that presented itself at Tennessee, and Coach Saban gave me the advice that, 'In the coaching profession, as a young coach, make sure that you make the best decision professionally,' and that young coaches don't need to be looking for jobs very quickly."

On his own development over the last two seasons:

"The biggest thing that you learn in the NFL is that this game is about relationships, it's about partnerships, give and take. It's about seeking input and giving input, and that's player-to-coach and coach-to-player. No coach has all the answers. The players are the ones that are seeing it through their helmet on the grass. I think that's big for a coach, especially at this level, to have some flexibility to listen to the players, because the players sometimes know best."