

# Lions' Caldwell: 'I feel good about where we are'



Dave Birkett, Detroit Free Press

8:55 a.m. EDT June 12, 2015



(Photo: Mandi Wright, Detroit Free Press)

The ring on his right hand had 50 glittering diamonds and an unmistakable synthetic blue sapphire horseshoe.

The one on his left — on his index finger so as not to disturb the wedding band two digits over — was so large its 243 round-cut diamonds seemed to swallow his whole hand.

And when Detroit Lions coach Jim Caldwell was asked about the Super Bowl rings he wore to the Sound Mind Sound Body camp Thursday, where he gave a 25-minute presentation to more than 1,100 campers on leadership, he casually slipped his hands into his pocket to dissuade anyone from taking pictures.

"Never," Caldwell said when asked how often he wears the tokens of championships he won as an assistant with the Indianapolis Colts and Baltimore Ravens. "Just for something like this, where kids probably haven't had a chance to see one or two. Other than that I don't wear them."

Why not, a reporter asked.

"Because that's history," Caldwell said. "We need new ones now, right? A couple more."



DETROIT FREE PRESS

Lions' Tomlinson 'really making good progress' in OTAs

(<http://www.freep.com/story/sports/nfl/lions/2015/06/11/laken-tomlinson/71087264/>)

The Lions held their 10th and final organized team activity practice of the spring Thursday, and after they finished Caldwell took a few hours out of his schedule to visit a camp that has grown in size and prestige in its 11 years of existence.

Along with football, the camp is designed to teach life skills to its middle- and high-school participants, and on Thursday, Caldwell and Hall of Fame running back Jerome Bettis were keynote speakers.

Bettis, from Detroit Mackenzie, implored campers to stay disciplined and committed as they chase the same dreams he once had.

"Just understand that I grew up the heart of Detroit, I went to public school and I was successful," Bettis told the campers. "Anybody in this room has the potential for greatness, you just got to go out there and grab it."

And Caldwell, with a power-point presentation to drive home his message, listed his six pillars of effective leadership, repeating many of the same messages he's told his players over the years.

"It's kind of part of what we believe in," Caldwell said. "Authenticity is key and I think everybody's just a little bit different. And the other thing, we believe in confidence and we believe in humility, authenticity, motivation, passion for our game and service for our community, so those are things we talk about constantly."

Caldwell drew on his own experiences in his speech, including his Super Bowl run with the Colts after they finished the 2006 regular season with three losses in their last five games, and cited many of the same quotes and books he peppered his news conferences with in his first season as Lions coach last year.

Fielding Yost got a nod. Tony Dungy and Malcolm Gladwell, too. And he showed clips of players from various sports — Michael Jordan, Reggie White, Ken Griffey Jr. and current Lions Calvin Johnson and Matt Prater among them — performing their signature moves in clutch situations.



DETROIT FREE PRESS

Lions' Swanson seizes command at center during OTAs

[\(http://www.freep.com/story/sports/nfl/lions/2015/06/11/detroit-lions-travis-swanson/71050220/\)](http://www.freep.com/story/sports/nfl/lions/2015/06/11/detroit-lions-travis-swanson/71050220/)

"You have to be real, you have to be yourself," Caldwell told the campers. "Be comfortable in your own shoes. I was talking to our guys the other day and talking to them about there's some guys you can look at and you can say, 'You know what, this guy is better at doing this particular thing than anybody else in the league.' That's what you're trying to accomplish."

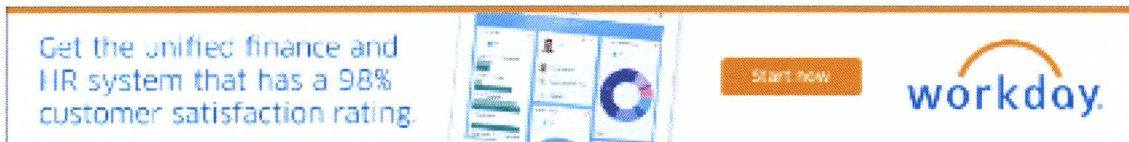
After his speech, and after meeting a handful of campers and posing for pictures with those rings back out of his pocket, Caldwell gave a glimpse of what he's trying to accomplish with the Lions this year.

The Lions host mandatory minicamp next week, and Caldwell said he likes where his team is at this point in the off-season as it tries to build on last year's 11-5 finish.

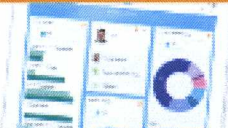
"Yeah, I do," he said. "I feel good about where we are, to be honest with you. I really do. If we stay healthy we'll be all right."

Contact Dave Birkett: [dbirkett@freepress.com](mailto:dbirkett@freepress.com) (<mailto:dbirkett@freepress.com>). Follow him on Twitter [@davebirkett](https://twitter.com/davebirkett) (<http://www.twitter.com/davebirkett>).


Read or Share this story: <http://on.freep.com/1S9cNKG>



Get the unified finance and HR system that has a 98% customer satisfaction rating.



START NOW



workday.