

North Carolina 19, Virginia Tech 22 • October 13, 2018

Postgame Quotes

North Carolina Head Coach Larry Fedora

Opening Statement

“First, I want to give Virginia Tech credit for making the plays to win a game like that. I give them the credit. They made the plays when they had to and got it done. I’m extremely proud of our team and the way our guys prepared all week, I’m proud of the way they came out and played. They played hard and physical. In everything they did they believed in each other, we just didn’t make enough plays to win a football game. We had a lot of opportunities and there were a lot of really good things on the field today and we just couldn’t get it done.”

On frustration about missed opportunities

“It’s frustrating, very frustrating. I don’t have a single explanation other than when we get down to the red zone, we have to smell the end zone and want to get there in the worst way and find a way to get there.”

On the key to finishing

“It’s really about paying attention to detail and the little things that you do every single day. It’s conquering that first challenge when your alarm goes off, it’s getting out of bed instead of hitting snooze, it’s making it to class on time, it’s making sure you’re turning in your paper when it’s supposed to be turned in, it’s making sure you’re where you’re supposed to be when you need to be there. You’re doing all of the things on the field and off the field. When you do all those things together, great things happen. I will say this, we’ve got a lot of guys that truly believe in what we’re doing and in each other, and they’re doing the things that we ask them to do. We will get there. It just takes one guy making one play and it’s a different ball game, and when we come in here and we’re happy. We didn’t make that play tonight.”

On Cade Fortin’s status

“I don’t know what his status is, but I thought the kid came in and did some really good things in the game. I think there were probably some throws he’d like to have back, but he made some really good throws also. We dropped one for a touchdown. There are a lot of plays in this game that I could point out that he didn’t make, but I thought he did a good job. I thought he was very poised. There were not too many times that I thought he was worried about the rush. I thought he really did a good job taking care of the football when he threw the ball. He took the ball where it was supposed to go.”

On Fortin’s poise as a true freshman

“It’s been a long time since he’s been out on the field. I would say that the first time I really saw his poise was when he came in during the East Carolina game, he was not rattled by anything. He understood the situation, where we were and what he needed to do. He’s been pretty level headed throughout everything we’ve thrown at him. Even if we’ve rattled him, he’s been pretty level headed. I think he’s handled himself well.”

On Nathan Elliott coming in out of the line up

“When you say what a team player is, that’s what Nathan Elliott is. He deeply cares about what’s best for the football team and doing whatever he can, whatever his role is, to help this team be successful. There’s no doubt in my mind that I knew he would prepare himself as if he was the starter in case he was called on. He went out there and he did a heck of a job. There were a couple throws he’d like to have back, but that’s the game of football. That’s the way it works. We have to do a better job of rallying around those guys.”

On defense during the last drive

“I thought our defense played tremendous throughout the entire game. I thought they played well on the last drive. You’ve got to give that quarterback some credit. He made some plays. That 4th-and-9, we had him back there and he got out somehow. He found a way to make a play. That’s what I’m talking about. In a game like this, you have to find a way to make a play.”

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Postgame Quotes

Virginia Tech Head Coach Justin Fuente

Opening Statement:

“First of all, again, just thank you to everybody that made the trip down. Another fantastic showing by our fans, sticking with us through the game, making the travel down. They played a huge role in it. I’m awfully proud of our kids. Obviously, there are things that we did not do well tonight, but we continued to battle through adversity, and I think for an inexperienced group to fight through those things, ultimately find a way to win the ball game. I thought just in general terms, our red zone defense is what gave us a chance between obviously the fumble down there on the goal line. Offensively, a little bit of a frustrating night. We had several opportunities, particularly early in the game, to make some easy plays, I felt like, some routine plays we did not make, which really hurt us and set us behind the chains. But, the guys continued to battle as a group and ultimately found a way to get it done.”

On what he saw during goal line fumble

“I saw a big wad of people and a big collision, and what I thought was a helmet go up in the air, and I realized pretty quickly it was a ball... Instantaneously, that’s what I thought it was, I didn’t see the hat, I just saw something out of the corner of my eye go up in the air and I assumed it was a pad or a chinstrap, or a helmet or something, and then I saw it was the stinking ball. I didn’t know if we were going to recover it. I felt like we were batting it around, was it Jovonn [Quillen] that picked it up? And it looked like he was stumbling around, but obviously a huge play.”

On 98-yard drive after offensive struggles all game

“Well, I think it’s just a great example of just sticking with it. I think they were disappointed they weren’t playing any better, but they weren’t frustrated and to me there’s a big difference. They just kept plugging away, and to find a way, we felt like we had some things we could do, we just weren’t doing them very well.”

On Ryan Willis’s mistakes and 98-yard drive, and what he told him

“Well, I didn’t tell him anything specific. He knows the situation, and I told him we were going to go for two when we scored. He stayed in there and battled and scratched and clawed and put together a nice drive.”

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Postgame Quotes

Player Quotes

Nathan Elliott • QB • 11

On frustration not scoring TD's within Red Zone

"It's really frustrating. It's what this game is. It's why we love this game. The ups and the downs, it makes the ups even better. We are going to keep fighting and get better in the little things and not have plays like that we leave on the field that we need to make. By doing so, we will win games."

On Fedora's comment that this team is almost over the hump

"We definitely are. Virginia Tech is a really good football team, a really well coached football team that we played today. We played them very close. We honestly should have won that game. If we do not make those couple little mistakes, we win that game. Like he said, we are that close to winning."

On being called "the ultimate team player" by Fedora

"I mean I love this game. I grew up in a small town, and all we did was play football. However, that looks, whether I'm coming into the game in the second half or coming into the game in the fourth quarter, I do not care because I just want to play football. I'm going to be ready when I am out there playing because that is what I do."

Michael Carter • TB • 8

On big runs

"The offensive line did a really good job from start to finish. It came down to making plays. When you think of making plays, you think of skill guys. Every down, the offensive line has a one on one to win, and they won them for the majority of the game. So it starts with them."

On Improvements when in the Red Zone

"When we get in the Red Zone, we have to change our mindset. There are different mindsets for different situations in a game. If it is fourth and one, it is downhill. Or, if it is third and long you get the first down by any means. We have to flip the switch when we get in the Red Zone."

Patrice Rene • CB • 5

On guarding the pass so well

"We had a great game plan going in. Coach JP did a great job reading their offense. We kind of knew what to expect and what plays they were going to run. So, we were very cued in on tips and reminders which made the game slow down for us. It made it really easy and we were able to fly around and make plays."

On Defense performance

"I'm proud of the defense. At the end of the day, it does not matter unless we win. This one definitely hurts. We had them where we wanted them. At it came down at the end of the day on the defensive hands. We had to get the stops. Fourth down on multiple occasions. We did not do that, so we have to go back in the lab and get better and move on."

Malik Carney • LB • 53

On fatigue setting in on VT's last drive

"It's an 18-play drive. Of course, there was fatigue. In a game like that with a few minutes left, you have to find a way to get it done. It doesn't matter how tired we are, that's what we play for. We play for wins and losses and we couldn't get it done today. But, we are going to come out tomorrow and make sure we get those mistakes corrected and be a better football team."

On Carolina's playmakers

"Honestly, I think those are our playmakers: Dazz [Dazz Newsome], Mike [Michael Carter] and Ant [Anthony Ratliff-Williams]. Those guys are our playmakers and we have to find a way to get those guys involved to make plays. Once we get those receivers the ball it will open everything up for Mike (Michael Carter). I think that is how we start clicking and we keep rolling on the offensive side."

On having Aaron Crawford back

"Good. Another leader on the team, a guy who holds down the middle and the front. Just his presence means a lot... Just being a leader. Talking to guys, making sure they are planning their blocks right, using their hands, footwork. It's just positive."

Jason Strowbridge • DE • 55

On what happened during the last drive

"I think we just needed to refocus. For some of us, the pressure got to our heads. Maybe our eyes were in different spots. It was possibly the pressure but not much different than other spots."

On having key players back on defense

"Every week we try to do our best. Everything was just clicking. We had both our ends back, so it definitely helped having both of them in at the same time. They did a great job creating pressure."

On the atmosphere on Kenan

"It was great. I don't think I have ever played in a louder Kenan. It definitely played a role in how we played."

Cole Holcomb • LB • 36

On how this game compares to rebounding from other difficult losses

“Tomorrow we are going to come back, and we are going to work. I am going to make sure my guys are ready for next week. We are right there, it’s just about finishing the game.”

On energy going into the second half

“Going into halftime, we felt good. We felt like we had answers for everything they were trying to give us. We just had to find the momentum and keep it going, which I feel like we did for most of the time.”

On being so close to breaking through and winning

“We were right there, but it’s just about finishing the game. I think we played great football, but we just didn’t finish. I think they made good calls against what we had, and their guys made plays and ours didn’t. That’s what it comes down to. In the locker room, it hurts right now, because we realized just how close we were, but tomorrow we are going to come back and get to work and get ready for Syracuse.”

J.K. Britt • SS • 29

On second interception of his career

“It was a crucial moment of the game, we really needed to turnover. I delivered the turnover and it felt really good to do that for my team. Coach made a great call on putting me in position to make the play.”

First thoughts on how the game went

“It’s just the little things, you have to pay attention to detail. On both sides we had opportunities to close the game. We just need to get back to the basics and make sure we are doing our jobs. I feel like we did some really great things on both sides, and every game you’re going to take some things and learn from it. They did a great job in preparation so we have to tip our hats to those guys.”

On impact of Newsome and Carter

“Those guys right there are dynamites. They have big player ability. Every time they get the ball they can go for twenty or sixty, so we love to have those guys out there at the same time.”

Seeing the ball better tonight versus other games this season

“I think one of the biggest differences was that we were able to get pressure on the quarterback, he had to get that ball out of his hands quick. At practice this week guys really paid attention to seeing the ball and making plays on the balls in the air and that really transferred over to the game.”