

Virginia Tech Football
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Virginia Tech Bud Foster Q&A Highlights

On the challenges of missing Divine Deablo and having to work in so many young players on defense.

“That was kind of a game-call decision about Divine [Deablo], who tweaked his hamstring in Wednesday’s practice. I thought Tyree [Rodgers] stepped up and did a nice job. They had a long play on him early, but I thought he settled down and played well after that. We’re thin at corner. Caleb Farley tweaked his ankle early. He played in the second half, but I’m not sure how well. Bottom line, they made some plays early. The quarterback made some plays. I thought there was a stretch where we played really well on defense. It was disappointing; we had a couple guys late on their reads on the backside. They blocked the play up pretty good. We had a couple guys jump outside which we didn’t like but that [97-yard rush by Dexter Williams] shouldn’t have been 97 yards. After that we kind of self-destructed a little bit. The one touchdown pass, we were playing in a two-deep coverage and should have had a deep-half safety. Those things are pretty frustrating from our part. But that’s also what we’re dealing with, young guys. You rep those things in practice and you should be able to do it in a game. When the lights are on, we have to be better in those situations. We played solid football early, but in the second half, we didn’t execute like we needed to do, and they did. That was the difference in the football game.”

Did Notre Dame adjust anything in the second half that opened up the passing game?

“Not really. They popped that one run play. You take that one play out; we really controlled the run game. They were doing a lot of crossing and mesh routes; they weren’t a big vertical team. On third down, they were running more crossing and dig routes. We were really playing a coverage where we wanted to take away the deeper throws and have them throw it underneath. The second touchdown after the run was a busted coverage. We should’ve been in a deep-half and the guy chased the dig when we had a linebacker on there. They weren’t a big throw-it-down-the-field team. They were efficient, making good throws and having yards after the catch. We were able to kind of control that early. They executed a couple plays. I’m going to go back and look, but that goes back to, they made the plays and we didn’t execute. That was pretty disappointing.”

What were your impressions of Notre Dame quarterback Ian Book?

“He’s a competitor. They’ve got a really talented football team around him. They’re big and physical up front. He played well early. We were able to get some pressure on him a little bit and rattle him. Reggie [Floyd] made a nice play on the interception. We had some opportunities all the way around, offensively, defensively, and on special teams. We gave ourselves a chance. We just didn’t capitalize. It was obviously disappointing as a team. But [Book] is a good football player with a great future. At the end of the day, I thought [Notre Dame running back Dexter Williams] was the difference. He made a difference in the game against Stanford and he made a difference in the game today with that big run.”

What happened on the forty-yard touchdown pass in the third quarter with Caleb Farley?

“We were in a Tampa-2 coverage. [Farley] should have been a flat defender. We had safety help over the top; the safety chased a guy that was running a dig instead of being over the top. Caleb could have sunk off. We had a linebacker that should’ve been the secondary contain guy. Those things make you pull your hair out. Those are plays that sometimes, until those guys see it, they have to learn how to play it right. To me, that’s disappointing.”

Is it challenging to rally a young defense together when things aren't going well?

"We had a group a couple years ago [against Notre Dame] where we got down and kept fighting our tail off. Or the Arkansas game where you're down 24-0 and we just kept fighting. It's 10-9 and Notre Dame's defense creates a play with a scoop and score. Our guys came off the field after the P.A.T. like they gave up the touchdown. I pulled them together and said, 'we're playing our tails off right now. Keep your head up, we've got a lot of football left.' That's where we've got to have some maturity. Go to the next play. There are momentum swings. How we handle those swings is where we have to be better. Just go to the next play. Hopefully we can create something. Like I said, I thought we gave a good effort. I liked our energy, and how hard we were playing. Our tackling was crisp for the most part. The bottom line is, in the second half, they made plays and we didn't."