

**Virginia Tech Football**  
**Defensive Coordinator Bud Foster Q&A Highlights**  
**Game 9 - Media Conference**  
**November 6, 2018**

***On what was it like having two linebackers starting their first game and playing as well as they did against Boston College:***

“After watching the film, I was really encouraged by Rico [Kearney] and Dax [Hollifield]. They both played really hard. I thought they continued to get better as they game went along and that’s good for us, just from the standpoint that at least I know I have some quality depth at that position and you have some experience. Which is exciting, because you have some young talented players that makes that room very competitive. It’s also one of those positions where you can be a play away from a being a guy pretty quickly. I thought they both played hard. Could they play better, yeah, but I thought they improved as the game went along.”

***On potential options at cornerback with Bryce Watts out:***

“We’re just going to kind and see. Jovonn [Quillen] has a shot to come in. He has to be consistently good. [Jermaine] Waller is a guy that has a lot of talent. We want him to step up and now he’s going to be in a position to perform. There’s another guy named Armani Chatman that is a young guy that we were hoping to redshirt, but he’s going to end up being thrown in the fire. I do like what I have seen from him, but it’s kind of where we are with the position with injuries. Obviously, you could take Tyree Rogers and move him back to cornerback. He’s another guy we have discussed. He has played there before and we really just moved him to safety this year, so I think that would be a move that we could do with a guy that has played a little bit there. It’s going to be time for some young guys to step up.”

***On how he thought Quillen did in stepping into the role last week in place of Watts:***

“He played solid. I though our run fits could have been better at the corner spot. Quillen’s effort has been outstanding. Just like a lot of positions, we’re working to perform on a consistent basis at a high level is what we have to do at every position.”

***On the team’s next-man-up mentality***

“Well, so far they haven’t been too flustered. We would like them to perform a little bit better. I thought our effort was outstanding the other day, but that’s no consolation prize. Like I said after the game, we have to perform and not just play. Obviously, it’s fun to see those guys step up, play extremely hard. Being the next man up is what we talk about. You’re a play away from bring the guy, but we need them to be a play away from being the guy and also to be a performer. That goes back to our practice habits and our consistency in practice. You probably heard Coach Fuente say, and it’s true, ‘the most important thing we do other than playing the game is practice.’ That’s where we prepare ourselves to perform on Saturdays. I think that’s where the young guys really have to understand that we are practicing with a purpose, not just punching the clock. I do like their mentality about stepping forward. Now we just need them to step forward and be consistent.”

***On what concerns him about playing some many young guys:***

“It’s just the inexperience. You have to go over almost every little detail, every minor thing, now that’s just with a young group. We were just talking about it today as a staff. We have a lot of last year’s games when you’re playing this type of game you look at last year’s film a little bit. We were just talking about some of the simple things that maybe you took for granted with a group that was experienced and then all of sudden with this group you have to go over every detail. Not that we didn’t before, but there was that time, that process that those guys had to go through as well and that’s probably the biggest thing. Whether it’s a young group of linebackers or just a group tackles, or defensive ends, or defensive backs. You have to go over every little thing, because they haven’t seen everything. The hard part is showing them everything in a short period of time in a game week.

“For a guy like Andrew [Motuapuaka], he had seen a lot of reps. I didn’t have to tell him about a certain formation because he had already seen it. Maybe they had only shown it one time, or we might flash it, or maybe we didn’t have to practice that, but you could show it on film and they would get it. This a group that you probably have to put on the field and let them run through it one time and that’s probably the difference.”

***On does he still see a lot of gray areas with the targeting rule:***

“Without a doubt. It’s a gray area big time. There are several plays you could pick from each week that could be questionable about targeting. It’s just a very questionable play. It’s a hard play to call and right now they’re calling it from the press box. I think that there are several plays that they could stop the game for that they don’t. To pick one play out in our game, when there are several others that could be called. I just think it’s just very, very hard to call. It was unfortunate for Khalil [Ladler]. I didn’t think he was really trying to do that, but that was the end result.”

***On how the targeting rule has impacted how he teaches tackling techniques:***

“We practice as good a fundamental as anybody I think as far as how we teach tackling. Obviously, we take the head out of it. The helmet is for protection not as a weapon and he was not using it that way. I think he was going to make a good tackle and I think it was a combination of where the offensive player’s body drops and a lot of different things go into that play. I just think it’s a very hard play to call. It always seems it’s called on defenses and kicking situations, but you never see it called on a crack-back block. That’s my gripe as a defensive guy. They don’t look at it that way. They only look at it as an offensive guy being defenseless, but there are a lot of defenseless defenders being blocked. It needs to be called both ways in my opinion.”

***On whether the goal line stand against Pitt in 2017 one of his prouder moments in recent memory and whether he can use it as motivation for this team:***

“Obviously, you can go back to that series and show what perseverance as well as mental toughness and to go to the next play. I think that’s what it showed. Reggie Floyd chasing that receiver down and then going four straight plays and playing hard relentless football. That’s a

great teaching moment and big time stand in a big-time game that two teams competed extremely hard for 60 minutes. It's a new team, a new season and obviously we have tremendous respect for Pittsburgh. I have been here a long time and we have played against them a long time. There have been a lot of tough hard-nosed football games and I expect this to be one to. I know we've beaten them the last couple of years and it's going to be I think senior day this year and there's a lot on the line. They're in the lead and they want to keep it and keep it going and we have a lot to play for and hopefully we have a big-time week of practice."

***On whether DB Divine Deablo could continue playing WHIP after working there against Boston College:***

"We could. Right now, because of our situation in the back end we're looking at a lot of different options. We're getting [Kahlil] Ladler back, Ladler gives us some things. He has some assets closer to the line of scrimmage and his liabilities are farther away as it's been shown. Divine [Deablo] can do some different things and I like the speed that Tyree Rogers plays with from the safety spot. We have some options there and it goes back to what we do at cornerback and how we adjust some guys in the backend. It gives us some adaptability to move some people around now that we have been able to play some guys at a couple different spots and trying to make the best fit for us to get out best 11 guys on the field."

***On the possibility of getting Dylan Rivers and Rayshard Ashby back this week:***

"It's day-to-day with those guys right now. We'll find a little bit more out today. All of our guys that are banged up are working extremely hard to get back, which I appreciate, but it's a day-to-day process right now."