

Virginia Tech Football
Safeties Coach - Tyrone Nix Q&A Highlights
Fall Camp – Media Conference
August 13, 2018

On his prior relationship with Justin Fuente and how he arrived at Virginia Tech:

“First of all, for Coach Fuente to give me this opportunity was just really special. I’ve known him for quite some years now and we played them when I was at Middle Tennessee. We had a couple of series where we were able to take advantage of him a little bit and that started the series.”

On the phone call between he and Fuente after the Memphis-MTSU series concluded:

“I recall that. At Middle Tennessee, we had a contract with Memphis, which was the in-state game for us. After the series ended Coach Fuente and a couple of the other guys on the staff shared ideas and some tendencies that we saw within their offense and some things they saw within my defense. It created a relationship with [Coach] Fuente and myself at that moment. Throughout the years we haven’t kept in touch like a normal person would but there was a lot of guys on this staff that I communicated with. One of the guys was James Shibest and we remained friends for years and we worked together at Ole Miss. The other relationship that I had was with Coach Foster. My first year of coaching I came up and visited with Foster in 1995 and throughout the years we have kept a connection, maintained communication and shared ideas. Mostly me getting ideas from him but this game is a different business, you never know where you are going to end up. I’m fortunate and blessed to be here on this staff.”

On the his role as a defensive analyst last year at Texas A&M:

“Obviously I felt like it was the right move for me at the time. It was a chance to get back into the Power Five and learning under some tutelage of some excellent coaches. With that role, I did a little bit of everything. The biggest thing was I got to see other people work and how they do things defensively. When Coach Fuente presented this opportunity I knew I wanted to get back on the field. I knew I wanted to get back recruiting and I wanted to be hands on. It was just the right opportunity at the right time and I couldn’t say no to it. Now I have the chance to come work with Coach Foster who is one of the best in the business. In the process of being an assistant coach, you are always learning and trying to get better. Who better to learn under than a guy like Coach Foster with all the history and tradition that he has consistently put out year in and year out?”

On whether he’s coached safeties before:

“I’ve actually coached defensive backs before. I had the entire secondary back at Southern Mississippi. You are always learning and it’s always changing. Bottom line you play with technique and you put your eyes in the right place and you go out and execute. The thing that is

unique here is that they have had great defensive back play here year in and year out. We expect the same thing this year.”

On being vocal and getting players to listen to his coaching:

“I think you have to make your point of emphasis at the right time. The biggest thing I harp on other than technique is effort and when a guy isn’t giving you that then they are not playing to the standard that’s been set here for many years. I like to let them know that it’s not acceptable at this point.”

On his rapid rise to a defensive coordinator and some of his influences along the way:

“It’s being at the right place at the right time. I started out with Jeff Bower who gave me an opportunity (at Southern Miss). John Thompson taught me but year in and year out you visit with other coaches. Coaches like Coach Foster, Carl Torbush and Ellis Johnson. It goes on and on of guys who impact you as a position coach and as a coordinator. You just mold your defense to fit your personnel and a little of your personality. I couldn’t single at one guy, it’s just a combination of people. I’m just blessed to be with Coach Foster because he has done it on a consistent basis. I’m trying to figure out the ends and outs of how he continues to have success.”

On the collaboration with Coach Foster being an important part of his role:

“When I was hired Coach Foster said that they were wanting a guy that’s not just a position coach but a guy who’d actually put a game plan together, who’d have more ideas going into the game week in and week out. I was fortunate enough to have done some of those things but all in all, I think that played a part in me getting the job and being in this position.”

On the safety competition between Khalil Ladler and Divine Deablo:

“Both kids are learning. They are continuing to compete but neither one of them has on consistent bases but they have a high ceiling. They are very talented kids and they are great kids. They have a tremendous work ethic and I don’t know who is going to start but they are both going to play come the first game.”

On the impact of Reggie Floyd on the young safeties:

“Reggie Floyd is a tremendous athlete and a very physical football player. Floyd has taken on a leadership role in the secondary. He has had a good camp thus far and he continues to improve every day that he comes out. Ladler and Deablo are competing. Ladler has had a great camp and is a very intelligent kid. He is a kid who is fundamentally sound and does a lot of great things for us. Deablo is a kid who has a huge ceiling that hasn’t played that much due to injury. We are trying to keep him healthy and continue to let him learn. We are going to try to find a way to get our best players on the field. I don’t think either one of them will be on the sideline very much.”