

**Virginia Tech Football**  
**Defensive Coordinator Bud Foster Q&A Highlights**  
**VT Media Day**  
**August 26, 2018**

***On DL Vinny Mihota's move back inside from a weight and injury recovery standpoint:***

“From a weight standpoint, he’s really worked hard to put weight on and hold up inside so to speak. I’m not sure he might be a little too heavy for where he is and where we want him to be with his knee recovery. Where is he with his recovery? I’m not sure if he is 100 percent yet, he’s out there doing things and he’s got tendonitis in the knee, which kind of aggravates that and is working on getting some strength back in that knee. But he’s a guy that is working his tail off and we’re controlling the number of reps he is getting, which is similar to what we do when other guys have injuries, too. We are counting on him to just continue to improve and develop and hopefully be ready for some duty for us in this first game and continue to get better and better each and every week.”

***On if he has been studying what Florida State Head Coach Willie Taggart did at Oregon offensively:***

“Yeah, he was at Oregon for one season and we have looked at his film there. We also have looked at the film when he was at South Florida before that. We have looked at and studies Florida State’s personnel. They’re still Florida State and they’re still extremely dynamic. I think we’ll see similar to what we saw from Oregon, what worked for them. I do know this, I know Florida State has some dynamic backs. You hear they might be playing multiple backs, which would not surprise me because I know that’s one of their strengths for their football team offensively. He’s done a great job wherever he’s been, but we’re looking forward to playing Florida State. In my time here, they’ve been tough to beat. We’ve only been able to beat them a couple times. We are going to have to play extremely well. We’ve got a young group going down there and I’m looking forward to playing against them.”

***On if it's harder to make in-game changes with a younger defense:***

“It could be, we’ve talked about that. The first two-and-a-half weeks of fall camp were basically preparing for the season. So, hopefully, if we have to make an adjustment as we trim down our game plan. Obviously, we aren’t going to have everything we practiced during fall camp implemented into the game, we’ll zero on some things, but at the same time, we might have to fall back on something that we did during fall camp because of an adjustment we may need to make. That’s something you always worry about with a young, inexperienced team. Are they a group that learns with reps group or can they handle that on the fly? And that’s something that we’ll need to find out as we progress. I’m going into this game thinking that hopefully we’ll pin our ears back and play, play hard and play well. But there’s a lot of question marks as far as guys playing in their first college football game. I’m excited to see them get out there and play and we’ll need a series or two to get going.”

***On if LB Rayshard Ashby is one of those players that can take coaching on the fly?***

“Yeah, he is. Rayshard reminds me a lot of Andrew [Motuapuaka] in a lot of ways. Just his demeanor, his work ethic. When he steps in this door here at the Merryman Center, he comes to work every day, whether it’s in the weight room or film study and then caring that out onto the football field. He is going to be a great mentor and role model for younger guys coming in, not just at his position but on our football. Just like Andrew was or Sam Rogers was, different guys we’ve had over the years. I like his football IQ and then how he approaches his day to day on what we expect and he understands that.”

***On if there’s one thing at the LB position that keeps him up at night:***

“Not necessarily to be honest with you. I have a lot of confidence and trust in these guys. But as you said, the best teacher is experience and you got a guy who has played four snaps and the other guys have not played any. They all have come from good programs and know how to win. We just have to perform on a consistent basis. Will there be a drop off after last year’s group? I hope not but there probably will be.

“There was a freak in No. 49 [Tremaine Edmunds] playing at one linebacker position, who made plays left and right. He was an eraser as we went back and did all of our film studies this offseason. And then you have a guy in Andrew [Motuapuaka], who just was a coach on the field when it was all said and done, with how he operated things, making the checks and the calls and just getting the defense lined up. I do like Rook’s (Rayshard Ashby’s) ability to do that, I think he has those things and the confidence to do that, which is a big part of that. Is there a drop off at the linebacker position? Probably so from the experience standpoint for sure, we don’t have a first-round draft pick right there anymore. But we’ve got some good football players, Dylan Rivers was a highly-recruited kid. I’m anxious to see him perform. Dax Hollifield is guy who I really like what he is all about and I’m anxious to see him perform at this level. We’ve got two really good players at that position that I feel good about that will do their very best to play us.”

***On what it’s like for Florida State right now with it having two or three guys competing for the QB spot:***

“You know, I think it’s what you see is what you’re going to get. I think whoever is their quarterback, I think they’re going to run the offense that we’ve seen at Oregon or South Florida. So, we are not really thinking about who will be playing quarterback, though, I do think I know who will be their guy. But we are not preparing for three different offenses is my point.”

***On if he would or wouldn’t be surprised if there’s a step back for his defensive group in 2018:***

“Well, I don’t know. I can’t look into the future to see exactly what we are going to be like. I know in our past, when we have been this young, we’ve had a group of kids that trust the process and they trust the training. As long as they do those things and they learn to compete every day and every week and every game, then each week we’ll have an opportunity to get better. And that’s really what I’m going to judge things on. Is there going to be a drop off stat wise? Probably so, I don’t know. But you can’t always evaluate your cusses based off of

statistics. The success comes in wins and losses and how they improve and how they grow and how they develop. I think if we can do of what we've done in the past, that trend that we've done, I think you'll see a group that, hopefully, if we stay healthy, and then at the same time, continue to improve each and every week. It's not where you start, but it's how you finish and that's kind of what we're looking for. We are going to approach it one play at a time and on game at a time and then we'll go to the next one and go do it the same way."