**Virginia Tech Football**

**Head Coach Justin Fuente Q&A Highlights**

**Fall Camp – Media Conference**

**August 6, 2018**

***On DB Reggie Floyd being just one of the guys in the secondary to now being a veteran leader in the defensive backfield:***

“I think everybody leads in their own way. What does that look like and what does that sound like I think is different for everyone. First and foremost it starts with taking care of yourself. Reggie [Floyd] has had a great summer and I think it has kind of dawned on him that he is, for lack of a better team, the veteran back there. I think he is filling his way through that role for him in the last calendar year. I think he has done a fair job of that.”

***On looking at the competition at the other safety spot, is leadership qualities important:***“It starts with taking care of yourself, knowing what to do and where to being. Obviously, there is a level of communication that has nothing to do with leadership in the backend that must have to occur for you to get everybody on the same page. I would say those young guys, guys are making sure that they take care of themselves right now.”

***On it being a while for WR Damon Hazelton to get to this point after redshirting last year and how he got on the coaching staff’s radar when he announced he was transferring:***“I don’t recall how his name originally came up, but we do recruit his area. So, I’m not sure if it came from a high school coach or how it all started. But we did quite a bit of due diligence on Damon [Hazelton] and why he wanted to leave and what he was like, trying to make sure he would be a good fit. He has been a great fit.

“Going from a situation like he was in when he played quite a bit as a true freshman to all of the sudden not playing is a difficult situation for anyone. We just tried to challenge him and stay with him through the year and get him to improve his skill and continue to get bigger and stronger in the weight room, which he certainly has done. So, he has made the most of that during that time, even though he was out during the spring, he has made some strides from a physical standpoint.

“We’ve been really happy with him and obviously we are anxious to get further down the road. For a guy who has been here a year, he’s practiced some and didn’t in the spring and now he is working his way back into to working with everybody. But we are very happy that he is here and we felt like the reasons he wanted to leave and what he was looking for made us a good fit.”

***On WR Phil Patterson saying that fellow WR Damon Hazelton energizes the receiver group:***“I think [Damon Hazelton] is one of those guys that really likes football and likes working out and being around and likes catching balls. Even when he is limited from being able to run and that sort of stuff, it seems like he always has a ball in his hand and is always trying to improve. I do think that rubs off on those guys. He was one of those guys who would be here on a weekend with a couple other guys trying to improve, and those other kids certainly notice that.”

***On his advice to newcomers on getting through fall camp:***

“First of all, I would say it’s the knowledge base, getting as much done ahead of time will help you and have as good as an understanding as you can of the subject material before you’re tired, sweaty, hot and hungry is a wise way to go. I just think that is where you see young guys start off well and then sometimes fall behind is they just can’t hold the rope that long because of the mental aspect of what we are asking them to do. But in terms of schematics, special teams and what side of the ball I’m on and all of that sort of stuff. And then you are going to be in condition enough nowadays to make it through camp, due to the summer programs. It used to be you would use the first two weeks of camp to get in shape and play football. That is not the case anymore. You show up and our kids are in great shape. It’s just the day after day part of it that is hard. For some of our guys, the freshmen, they are in school right now, which is challenging too because it adds another layer of study hall and class in between our walkthroughs and practice. So, it’s being able to hold the rope and maintain that consistency, getting rest when you can get rest, taking advantage of that, and being as prepared mentally as you can be when you roll into camp.”

***On LB Rayshard Ashby having a great spring and what stands out about him:***“I would say he is mature beyond his years. He is intelligent and hardworking and we felt like we knew that before while we were recruiting him and it has certainly proven to be true. I just think he has a general maturity level that is higher than some people his age. He just seems to be able to handle the grind of things on a daily basis a little better than his age. But he is sharp and he picks things up quickly and he genuinely cares. Being a good football, student and person are important to him on a daily basis.”