

Virginia Tech Football
Wide Receivers Coach – Holmon Wiggins Q&A Highlights
Fall Camp – Media Conference
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We are going to talk to WR Damon Hazelton here in a bit, what style of player is he? Are you looking at him as a slot or outside player? What are his strengths:

“The one thing we do offensively is we put those guys at every position. When we had Isaiah [Ford] he played inside and outside. We are going to ask guys to do a multitude of things from being a runner, a blocker and a pass catcher. He is a good receiver, we are going to try to move him around and not let guys pinpoint where we are going to keep him at.”

Is Hazelton a speed guy?

“He can do whatever you ask out of him. He is a great route runner, great hands, competitive, can run every route in the route tree and can run by a guy and jump over a guy. He is a pretty skilled athlete.”

Personality wise, what is Hazelton like to work with:

“He is probably one of the most mature kids that I’ve been around. Sometimes I lose sight that he is a sophomore. All of last year I had to remind myself that he is in his second year of college. The kid is motivated, self-driven, knows what he wants, a football junkie and a gym rat. I’m away and he is texting me videos of NFL guys and asking me ‘Coach what is this coverage?’ He loves it.”

What was Hazelton’s transfer like? How did you first get in contact with him? Were you surprised coming out of high school that Hazelton ended up at Ball State:

“It’s funny because I want to say he went to Franklin High School. I actually made a stop by there and we were actually looking at another kid and he was a late bloomer. He ended up going to Ball State. The funny thing is I got a call from my buddy Aaron Morehead and he was like ‘There is a receiver I’ve been talking to that I’d love to get to A&M but we don’t have any room for him, so you guys should get on him.’ We got wind of it and went to the archives. We studied up on some Ball State film and got a chance to look at him. We got the ball rolling talking to Damon and he ended up getting a little traffic from the ACC. We ended up getting him on campus, he ended up loving it and decided this was the place for him.”

When you say Hazelton was a late bloomer, do mean that from a physical standpoint:

“Yes, from a physical standpoint. He was actually a running back in high school. He was a 5’11”, 6’1” guy and now he is about 6’3”, 225 pounds. He looked completely different then compared to when he was going into his senior year. He also looks different from the day that he stood on campus and that’s a tribute to work ethic and also Coach Hilgart in the weight room.”

In your experience as a player and coach, what are some of the pitfalls that can detract you in training camp? What are the keys to success? Is it hydrating or setting your alarm:

“You probably need to set a couple of alarms because morning kind of comes pretty fast. There are long days with training camp. There is no doubt that hydration is key. We make sure our guys are being more proactive rather than reactive. It’s too late when you start cramping and you need water. Understanding that it’s a new year. The biggest pitfall is guys ride on what they did last year and they get comfortable and complacent. Every year is a new year, myself included. I have to do a good job of getting these guys

right and they have to do a good job of understanding that whatever they did last year doesn't matter or doesn't count."

This is your first time here that you don't have a headline receiver that's experienced, do you feel like the depth is better compared to the last couple of years:

"Our charge coming into this thing was always trying to build the depth. That first year we had three guys and if the bottom falls out where are we going to turn? Last year got better. This year we are getting it where we want it. We got some guys and we are putting them at different spots. Those guys are hungry to meet the challenge and I'm hungry also."

What did you challenge or ask WR Sean Savoy to improve on for this season:

"Everything, he had to improve on everything. He was inconsistent, had too many drops, was a bad route runner and had bad practice habits. So I challenged him on everything. The great thing is that he is a challengeable kid and he wants to be coached hard. I had the luxury of recruiting the kid so we have a pretty good relationship. He knows where I'm coming from and he knows I'm going to love him just as hard as I coach him. He needs to get better in a lot of areas and he is working to get there."