

Virginia Tech Football
Postgame Media Press Conference
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Virginia Tech Bud Foster Q&A Highlights

With a short week, what was the preparation like for this game and how did the players handle it?

“I thought we handled it pretty good. I thought we were a little sluggish on Wednesday, which would have been our Tuesday practice. But our Thursday practice was really sharp. I thought the guys handled everything really well. I thought we came out and played with some energy early. It seemed like we waned a little bit, but part of that was playing younger kids as the game went along. All-in-all, for a short week, I thought we responded very well.”

You have given up some big plays this week and last week. Is there a common thread in those plays?

“No, the run last week was good defense, the guy missed a tackle. It’s been happening. Today, you had two big plays for 130 yards. In both of them, they are teachable moments. The first one was, we needed to be checking out certain things and they came out in an empty formation. We should’ve checked to a certain defense, nobody recognized that, which to me was very disappointing. On Monday, I think we would’ve been locked in that way. So we can use that as a teaching moment. The second play, we brought a little bit of zone pressure and our end dropped to the flat. It was a quick screen. They had a lead blocker, he should’ve forced the play. Instead, he jumped inside and our corner was coming inside out, and ended up giving up leverage and losing containment. If the guy keeps that leverage, we have a chance to make that a minimal gain at best if we make the tackle. Those are correctable things, it’s not like it’s anything to do with talent or the structure of the defense. It goes back to technique and fundamentals and recognizing certain things and reacting to certain things.”

Coach Fuente mentioned last week how William & Mary’s time of possession was really key for them in Week One. What can you say about your team’s efficiency on third down and getting off the field?

“That was big early. I don’t know if they converted a third down in first half. That was big. Anytime we can get off the field and give the ball back to our offense, that’s critical. I felt like, going into this game, that’s the one thing William & Mary does, it’s a little like Boston College. They’re going to line up and try to run power, control the clock, and be physical up front. We felt like that might be their game plan a little bit. And maybe run it on third down. Last year, Delaware didn’t really try to throw the ball on third down. These guys are kind of in the same boat. They had a little trouble protecting their quarterback early. They got into a little twelve personnel, creating a lot of broad blocking surface to help their young tackles against our ends. A key point early was when we turned it over right away, and then we came right out the next series and created a turnover and kind of got the momentum back going our way, and got some juices flowing. I thought that was a big, big play early in the football game.”

In the first half, William & Mary had almost no rushing yards. Is this one of the first times this team has never allowed almost any rushing yards?

“Well, this defense in particular, yes. That’s the one thing we want to do. If we can make an offense one dimensional, that makes my calling the game a little bit different. It allows the kids to pin their ears back and anticipate certain things. Anytime we can stop the run, that’s critical for our success. We want to make the offense one-dimensional as much as possible.”

Do you have much of a relationship with William & Mary head coach Jimmy Laycock? What is the challenge of going up against him?

“I’ve known Jimmy for a long, long time. Our staffs used to play golf together back in the day. We’d go do some things and travel down to Williamsburg and play together. I’ve known a couple guys that I coached with that have coached with Jimmy. But really, a guy that has made a tremendous impact on the game of football. Offensively, when he was doing things and running the show, he was ahead of the game offensively, more so than a lot of people. That’s allowed him to have the success that he’s had for many years. He’s always had the challenge of being at a high academic institution, getting quality kids in there which he did. And then coaching them up to be competitive. I wish him the best as this season goes along and in retirement. He’s a guy that’s made an impact not just for players but for coaches, guys like myself. His longevity, how he did things, it’s just special to have an opportunity to coach against him.”

Who was the better golfer between Jimmy and Frank Beamer?

“I wasn’t in that group, I was with the beer drinking group. They were making a little more money than I was at the time. So I think they had some wagers on that I wasn’t involved with.”

What have you seen from the development of Houshun Gaines? Do you expect him to be a different guy each week?

“House loves the game of football. He loves to work, compete and practice. And it shows in his performance. He was a guy that really came on the last half of last season, and played more and more, and gained more confidence. You gain confidence when you have experience, that’s the best teacher. And he’s got some of that right now. He’s made some plays for us. He’s a quick twitch guy, he’s got a great ability to come off the edge. I wish he would gain a little bit more weight, that’s my biggest thing with him. I want him to eat, eat, eat. But I really like the direction he’s going.

When I put guys on the field, I want eleven playmakers. In the perfect world, you have five, six, or seven playmakers and the other four, five, or six play for us and not the opponent. We have the potential, particularly for the defensive line, because that is our most experienced group of guys, for guys to step up and make some plays.”