

**Virginia Tech Football**  
**Offensive Coordinator Brad Cornelsen Q&A Highlights**  
**Rhode Island Week Media Conference**  
**October 8, 2019**

***On how QB Hendon Hooker handled his first start:***

“Good, I was proud of him. He gave us a chance to win. Of course, first of all he took care of the ball. I was pleased with his operation because sometimes you get in and it’s different in the game, but he was poised and executed. He handled the operation, the clock, and all those little things that are involved in games that you don’t always get in practice. He was ready to go; he prepared and competed. We challenged the whole team and the offense to get tougher – what we displayed out there the week before was not us and who we want to be. So, that was the number one challenge for our team, and I felt like he tried to embody that, too.”

***On the decision to make the switch at QB from Ryan Willis to Hooker:***

“I mean, it’s not one particular game or drive but it’s the challenge that he’s had. He’s continuing to work through that, and he has to continue to get better at. It’s consistency, our team found out a good example of how close you can be one way or the other, and what consistency can do. Not just at that position, but when you start multiplying plays and positions those things add up. Hendon had done a great job and put himself in a position where we could trust him that he could go do what he did. We just felt like it was time. There had been too many mistakes and too many turnovers. Ryan has certainly still made plays and is capable of playing good games and taking care of the ball, we just felt like Hendon deserved a shot. We needed a change and that was the decision that went into it.”

***On rotating personnel on the offensive line:***

“It’s always nice to get those guys in there. There’s a fine balance of those guys getting used to the calls and playing beside each other, and staying fresh to be able to play hard and getting experience. I think it’s been a good balance of a little bit of both of those.”

***On how the usage of tight ends developed as the game against Miami progressed:***

“That’s how it works, you game plan and you get a lot of different people involved. You never know how the defense will play you with safeties or blitzes; you never know how the game will take shape – if you’ll get up or down or turn it over and so forth. You go into the games with a lot of different ways to get different guys the ball and that’s just the way it unfolds sometimes.”

***On how a productive rushing game leads to better opportunities to pass to a tight end:***

“It packs the defense down in there, and it gets them out of more coverage calls. Not only are they tighter, but their run scheme gets them tighter, too. When you see tight ends catching the ball off a play action, particularly in the flats, that’s usually the reason why because the defense is sinking down and tightening down for the run.”

***On Hooker's mobility providing more opportunities for different play calls:***

"I don't know if it's as much in the game plan and the play calls, but it is an 'x-factor' when he can make a guy miss. We called boot one time, and the defensive end got up the field and as I'm watching the play develop my thought is, 'We need to throw this ball away and avoid the sack.' Then he makes two guys miss and gets eight yards. So, there is a little bit in the game planning and the different things you can do with that type of athlete in the backfield. But it's when plays break down and he can make a guy miss that a one-yard gain turns into an eight-yard gain."

***On if assignments change for the offensive line when using a mobile quarterback:***

"No, we're always trying to push sustaining blocks and staying on them longer and longer. It's always something you're trying to get your whole offense – anybody who's blocking – to see as a constant. I think they realize that when they get in games. If you have a guy who all of a sudden breaks a few tackles, whether it's a tailback or a quarterback, it helps reinforce what we're trying to get them to do. They understand that this play can extend, and we have to continue to work. As far as scheme and technique and assignment nothing changes."

***On how C Bryan Hudson has improved over the last four games:***

"We're excited about him, he's such a smart player. He never makes the same mistake twice, and he's tough. He was a little banged up in fall camp and I feel like he gets more athletic and looks better every single week. I know he's getting more comfortable with what we're doing and how to do those things – that helps too – but he gets better every day. I couldn't be more excited about him and what he's doing at that spot."

***On how Hudson ended up playing center:***

"When we recruited him, we knew because of his size, mobility, intelligence, and toughness that he could probably play anywhere. As we got close to camp and got through summer we just looked at where do we need him. Even in the first week of camp we still weren't sure. He was playing mostly tackle to start with, but center was the spot we felt like we could probably need him the quickest, and that's the way it happened."

***On when OL Bryan Hudson moved from offensive tackle to center:***

"I can't remember the exact time to be honest with you. I know that when he got here, he started snapping, but he was mostly playing tackle through the summer and fall camp. I don't remember how long it went to be honest. Coach [Vance] Vice would know better, but it was probably a week or two into camp."

***On how criticism on social media affects him:***

"I don't see it. I know that's maybe hard to believe, but unless somebody tells me I don't see it. The funny thing about coaches and coaching is that nobody is harder on us than we are. We expect a lot out of ourselves, and no one is more disappointed or embarrassed when things aren't going well than we are. We don't need people to tell us what's going on and what needs to happen. We have a lot to do and paying attention to that that stuff is certainly not something I do. You just go to work, and you believe in what you're doing. There are reasons we do things

and things we believe in, and you just have to stay the course. That's part of anything that you do, there are ups and downs, you just have to keep plugging away."