

Virginia Tech Football
Defensive Coordinator Bud Foster Q&A Highlights
Georgia Tech Week Media Session
Nov. 12, 2019

On having to put guys in new positions on the field, such as linebacker:

“Yeah Dax [Hollifield] he has been taking several reps early, he has just such a high football IQ and mindset that he comes in quite a bit on his own and studies film... I’ll throw him in there, you know, on certain occasions. We need Dylan Rivers to keep coming along and be consistent at that spot, you know he really wouldn’t think it would be that big of an adjustment to go from Backer to Mike but for some guys it is a little bit different and challenging, but we need him to continue because he is a play away from being a guy, as well. But yeah; I’m pleased with how Dax has picked things up and I just appreciate that from him that he has that mentality to play both.”

On increase of QB pressure in recent games:

“Well, I think it’s a couple things and maybe we pressured a little bit more but also I think we’ve been able to stop the run a little bit better and get some people behind the sticks a little bit better. You’re getting a guy like Tyjuan Garbutt back healthy and he has been able to create a lot of pressure. I mean he is a guy who got a (half a sack) this past weekend, and he is playing like the guy I talked about during spring and fall Camp, he did take a step back from his injury but now he is starting to play better. Those young defensive tackles continue to improve and they’re athletic and those guys can create pressure. You know, got a big sack early and I thought their left tackle was a really good football player and the third play of the game beats him. I think it’s just getting guys in position, and more for our team, to get them in position to where we can pin our ears back and not be in third and short or in those situations where we can pin our ears back and anticipate more of what is happening as far as run or pass option.”

On trend of ACC defenses with high sack totals:

“I think who’s leading in our league is Pitt and we have some crossover (film) with them. They look really talented. I know Clemson is really good up front. I don’t know who’s up next, but those two are really good when we look across the board and you see some talented linemen. One thing that’s helped us is our run defense and getting them behind the chains in third-and-long situations. That allows you an opportunity to create some things, whether it’s a four-man rush or bringing some pressure.”

On success of CB Caleb Farley and Jermaine Waller in relation to the entire pass defense:

“I would think it’s a combination of things. You take Notre Dame, they threw it 50-odd plus times. Last week, we gave up two big plays in the passing game. There was a switch route on a three-deep coverage and there was a long touchdown pass. It was a good throw and catch. I just think it’s a team thing all the way around. We have to continue to limit explosive plays. That’s always difficult depending on the type of team you’re playing. There are teams that are RPO teams and you have to match up, and that’s one thing that concerns me this week. They have a couple of guys that can go deep. If you look at their quarterback’s stats, he’s not the most as far as completion percentage, but he throws a really good deep ball and they have some guys that really can run - No. 10 who’s a freshman is a 10.4-second 100-meter guy and can really run. Those are things that concern me a little bit. We have to mix up coverages for the quarterback, give him some other looks, so hopefully we get some pressure on him.”

On Farley and Waller in pass coverage:

"I have [been pleased]. I know Caleb leads the league in defended balls. They're both tied for top in interceptions. I've been pleased with how they've played. It's the nature of the game and people throwing the football. We eliminate yards after the catch. I'd like to be better on third down. That's where we've been really good over the years. We're in the 40-percent, upper-30 percent (conversion rate), and that's not nearly good enough. It's the full team, not just our corners. It's our underneath team, our safeties, linebackers, and matching people up."

On not having to prepare for the triple-option against Georgia Tech:

"It's pretty cool, to be honest with you. I might have been the first one to call (former GT head coach) Paul Johnson when he retired. I still have a lot of respect for Georgia Tech. Right now, they're playing hard and getting better. They're getting accustomed to what they want to do offensively. They've always played good defense from what I've observed, and they're big and physical up front. They've got some really good skill kids and that's what equalizes things. They've got a talented running back and wide receivers. Their quarterback can throw a deep ball, but is dangerous with the ball in his hands. Particularly down the stretch, they've been in really tight games against good people. We're going to have to go down there and play well on the road. The two previous were pretty close and last year they got after our tail — we should remember that. I know we're going to have to play a big time football game. That needs to be our focus — playing with great focus and execution, and respecting our opponent and playing a heck of a football game."

On his relationship with the fans and the Blacksburg community:

"I was always taught as a kid, from my parents, to treat people the way you want to be treated. Being around Coach Beamer, particularly here, and the stature he had — I was always just a football coach. I was a member of the community, a father, I went to PTA meetings when I could. You just be who you are. I hope that's what people came away with. I hope they thought, 'He wasn't a stranger.' I just wanted to treat people the way I wanted to be treated. I hope that's what I'm remembered for, being genuine and caring, and hopefully a likable and friendly guy."

On if anyone surprising reached out last weekend for his recognition:

"I've gotten some really cool emails and things of that nature, congratulating me on a career and commending us on how we operated things, and that's really cool. I can't put into words, it was overwhelming. The support, the love, people reaching out was phenomenal. I can't think everyone enough. The outpouring and caring was pretty cool. To win on top of that was pretty cool too. I remember going back to Coach Beamer and we wanted to play so hard and we went into overtime against a team that won our division. We were playing a really good Wake team and that capped it all off — having a special day and most importantly winning the football game. Now we just have to get it going."

On any second thoughts about retiring following recent success:

"[Laughs] Not really. As I was vacillating over this decision this past winter, spring and summer, I knew when it was time it would be time. There's certain things you do come across and say, 'This is it,' and there was a day when it came that way. I'm going to miss a lot of things about it, but there's going to be a lot of things I'm not. I'm a guy with a lot of hobbies and interests, and I'm looking forward to spending time with my family, my new wife, my kids and grandkids. I'm pleased with my decision. I told these kids I'm going to be their biggest fan going forward because I really like this direction we're going. That's the hard part about it because these guys are winning people, and they're going to get this thing the way we

want it to be and be highly competitive. That's the thing I'm going to miss. More importantly, I'm going to miss the relationships and working with the guys."