

Virginia Tech Football
Defensive Coordinator Bud Foster Q&A Highlights
Pitt Postgame Press Conference
Nov. 23, 2019

On Tech playing well the past few weeks:

“I’m really happy for them (the team), number one. They are the ones who put so much work and effort into this thing. Buying into trusting the process and the commitment and everything it takes to perform at this level. To see them execute and develop the self-confidence it takes to trust one another and to go out and execute. That is where we have been so much better down the stretch, our execution has continued to get a little bit better each and every week. It goes back to our practice habits. It is fun to see when we are playing well and them executing the things that we can do and we have done that the past few weeks. I’m really proud of our guys and we put ourselves in position to do something really special again. In our time here in the ACC we have been on the hunt quite a bit, a lot more than we haven’t been. It is fun to be back in that picture, to go do something and win our division and see what else goes. I’m really proud of our guys.”

On his final game at Lane Stadium:

“You couldn’t have scripted it any better when it’s all said and done. The weather could have been a little better. As far as down the stretch, the Wake game and then to go to Georgia Tech and play the way we did against one of our better rivals in this league. This was a playoff game basically, to play the way we did. We didn’t play tight. We played with confidence. We executed. We made plays. To see that from a coaching perspective is very gratifying and I know it’s rewarding for the guys and I’m just happy for them, I really am.”

On the defensive touchdown:

“That snowballs a little bit. We had the big play at Notre Dame and we had the play last week early. What a big time play by Rook, he’s just a great football player. If that guy is not all conference for first team at least by the media, I’m challenging you guys right now. I don’t know if there is a guy right now that means more to a defensive unit. The guy makes play after play after play. What a great strip, a great scoop and score. When we can do those things, again it goes back to that self-confidence. It gives your guys a little bit of juice and a little bit of energy. We were able to capitalize and just continue to play well when it was all said and done.”

On changes in the defense:

“The biggest changes are two things. Number one is their practice habits and number two is execution. To be honest with you it’s that simple. It’s not like we have been doing a lot of circuit work and tackling like we have done in the past. It goes back to the guys fitting in the right gap, knowing where their help is coming from. Do they have inside help do they have outside help, where are they fitting in as far as gaps or the alleys. As you know when we have been good over the years that is where we can make a team one-dimensional. That’s been what we have been able to do the last few weeks. Somebody made a comment that after Duke we have given up an

average of 80 rushing yards a game or something like that. That's pretty special. That's what you want to be at to be an elite defense and to be a championship caliber defense. We are playing that way right now. It's fun to see that we have playmakers in all the positions; it's fun to see the young defensive linemen continue to improve. They don't just play for us now they are becoming play makers. When you put all that together it's a fun group to watch. I make sure that they can't stay satisfied, we've got that group, we've got that leadership. You look at that guy to the right next to you guys and he is one of those guys who is not going to let anybody be satisfied along with several others. He sets the standard. I think that has been the biggest thing, our practice habits and our consistency in our execution.

On the late hit called on Chamarrri Conner against a player who appeared to still be in bounds:

"It's hard to see where that line was. That is such a close call particularly in big games. You see in the SEC there is a lot of hits like that that aren't called. I am for protecting the players as much as anybody, but all of a sudden a guy if you don't defend yourself he is going to run over you. It is what it is. Luckily it didn't hurt us and we made a couple big plays after it. Those are tough calls on the officials and on our guys. The guy can keep running and all of sudden he steps out of bounds and you are already committed, that's the hard part for the officials who make that call."

On preaching patience:

"That's the thing and we saw it this spring and all winter. We saw a group that was really hungry and eager to improve particularly on our side and as a football team. I saw us improve tremendously through spring practice and fall camp. For some reason we played tight and I don't know if that goes back to trust or confidence or whatever it is. Whatever it is, we found it. It goes back to our practice habits; it goes back to our consistency and being consistently good. You can be consistently bad too. It just goes to these guys kind of looking at each other in the eyes and saying, I'm not going to let you down. I'm going to do my job for you. Nobody has to go above and beyond what they are asked to do they just need to do their job to the best of their ability. That is what they have done, bought into that. Now you see that confidence and belief in one another and more importantly there is an accountability and responsibility with one another. When you get that going that's a fun group to coach."

On the meaning of the UVA game:

"It is an exciting opportunity for us, it has come down to us and Virginia a couple of times. I've got a lot of respect for the program up there. I know that we have to have a great week of practice. We've got a short week. We will turn our attention to those guys tomorrow at eight o'clock. To be honest with you I've seen them on defense but I haven't seen them on offense yet. I haven't really looked at them. I'm sure there is a lot of similarities to last year. I know they've got talented skilled kids. They are always one of the better offensive lines we play and their quarterback is a dynamic football player. I know they have been pounding the rock for a while to go pound that Hokie stone for us to come to their house. That is what it's all about. It's an opportunity for both teams and we can only control what we do in our preparation and how we are going to play. It's an exciting time for the state of Virginia in this league. I am excited for us. Since we have been in this league, we have been a bigtime contender. We always felt like

the road to the ACC Championship came through Blacksburg. It is doing that now. We are a part of that. It is along the way. It is fun to be back in the mix and in the hunt.”

Closing statement:

“Let me say this. I know we’ve got a couple more opportunities but I can’t thank you guys enough for how you’ve treated me over the years. You have always been fair and I know you guys have a tough job to do, but you guys have been very kind to me. I know there were times where you guys could have probably ripped me. I mean that whole heartedly, I appreciate how kind and fair you have been to me and I mean that. Thank you guys.”