

Virginia Tech Football
Quarterback Ryan Willis Q&A Highlights
Media Conference Spring Game
April 13, 2019

On the starting quarterback position

“That’s a tough question. We all have to act like we’re the starter at all times. We’re all leaders out there. I can’t announce myself. Obviously, we’re all trying our best, we’re all improving every day. It means a lot to all us. We just need to be leaders out there and control what we can control.”

On James Mitchell

“That kid’s going to be special. James – he’s a big, physical athlete. He’s one of the fastest players on the team and he’s playing tight end. It makes him very versatile. We can put him out wide. We can have him block. I’m really proud of that kid and what he’s doing. He has a bright future ahead of him.”

On depth at wide receiver

“Phil Patterson’s really impressed me this spring. He makes miraculous catches every day. I just need to be more consistent and get the ball to him. Tre Turner’s been awesome, Damon’s been awesome. Hezzy’s really taken a big step, happy to see that. There’s a lot of guys doing a lot of good things out there.”

Virginia Tech Football
Defensive Lineman Emmanuel Belmar Q&A Highlights
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On Jermaine Waller and his ball-jarring hit in the end zone

“I’ve seen a lot from Jermaine this year. Very physical player. If he sees a shot, he’s going to take it. Even though he’s our teammate – you’re not supposed to take that. He let up a little bit. He could’ve really boomed him a little better, but I’ve seen him do that a lot. Very physical player.”

On sacks

“I feel like our defensive line is getting better every single day. Our goal is a sack. We didn’t have many sacks last year, so that’s a spot we need to improve on. We work every single day. We’re getting more people – I think we have four or five more people coming in in the summer, so that should help out. Sacks is definitely what we need – turnovers, strip sacks.”

Virginia Tech Football
Quarterback Quincy Patterson Q&A Highlights
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On the quarterbacks

“I love both of the guys in that room. Ryan, being the fifth-year senior that he is, I do a lot of learning from him. Hendon, being as smart as he is, I learn a lot from him as well. A lot of people say it’s a quarterback competition. All three of us would be happy regardless of who starts. At this point we just want to win, and whoever can get those wins – we really don’t care.”

On his development as a passer

“I definitely have a lot of improvement to make. I think anybody, especially someone who’s been an assistant here knows that I have a lot of work to do. I definitely have a lot of work to do in that aspect. I’ve wanted training – I’ve been here for a while, so they’ve been trying to push me in that direction knowing that my high school wasn’t that type of school.... It’s my job to make sure I take that next level and be that person that could really do everything.”

Virginia Tech Football
Defensive Back Jermaine Waller Q&A Highlights
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On the secondary's motivation after last season

"It's big. Everybody is embracing the grind. We're all trying to make each other better and we're all giving each other things that we see that sometimes the coach might not see. I think that's helping us. Embracing the grind and living up to the LPD and DBU."

On his physical approach

"Honestly the biggest thing to me would be my confidence. I can play faster, so I can see things before they happen. My coach, Coach Mitchell – he always tries to get us to not just know corner but help everything work and come together."

Virginia Tech Football
Running Back Caleb Steward Q&A Highlights
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On his spring

“So far my spring’s been good. The main thing we’ve been working on as a running back group as a whole has just been making that second guy miss after the line of scrimmage. Just making guy’s miss in the open and I feel like I’ve gotten a lot better with that.”

On how he feels going into the fall

“I’m feeling really good. Each day I feel like I’m getting better. Knowing the plays more, getting the plays more down pat so that I can have a chance to play in the 2019 fall season.”

Virginia Tech Football
Quarterback Hendon Hooker Q&A Highlights
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On the quarterbacks

“I feel like the longer we’re here and the more we progress and learn more and help each other out in different situations – if one of us sees that we could have had a pass that or we should’ve thrown it away, we can have that relationship to be able to tell each other that you should’ve done this or that.”

On his pocket presence

“It is something that we work on constantly. Really just being calm in the pocket is something that you just have to get a feel for. After the first draw, I was really comfortable on the field.”

On his drive that started on the one-yard line

“It’s never comfortable when you start on your one-yard line. My head in the first set of downs was to just get out of the end zone and get a drive started.”

Virginia Tech Football
Tight End James Mitchell Q&A Highlights
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On how important playing today was for him

“I definitely wanted to play because I’ve really been working hard this spring. Dalton’s been out so I really tried to step up. I really wanted to play in front of the fans and show everybody how hard I’ve been working.”

On his versatility

“That’s my goal. The more things you can do, the more options you can get on the field so that’s definitely something I’m striving to be – a versatile player.”

On his relationship with Dalton Keene and if they work together

“Yeah definitely. Even today, when things would happen on the field, I’d go over ask him. He’s been able to help me because he’s going into his third year, so he’s pretty much seen it all. He’s definitely been able to help me and be that mentor for me, because he’s been able to do that role as well.”