

Virginia Tech Football
Offensive Coordinator Brad Cornelsen Q&A Highlights
Media Conference
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On how QB Ryan Willis handled not being named the starter going into fall camp:

“Oh, he was fine. He is a team player, a team-first guy and understands competition. He’s been through it now at two different schools. There was never any hesitation. But just because he’s been named the starter doesn’t mean he doesn’t have to still go and earn it every day. There was never a blink or anything.”

On the new era of the transfer portal and if it’s refreshing to see Ryan not go that route with embrace the competition:

“The one thing about Ryan is that he competes and he’s never been anything but team first since he stepped on this campus. That’s as good a room that I’ve ever gotten to coach. I’m lucky with the attitude and the unselfishness of that entire group. It’s not always that way, so it sure makes it fun a room full of guys like that.”

On WR Hezekiah Grimsley’s progress as a returner and receiver:

“Well, nobody works harder than Hez. He’s been doing it since he’s shown up. He’s predominantly been a slot since he got here. He had to play for us a little bit as a true freshman at the end of the year in the slot. And really, that’s what we did last year too. So, this fall camp has been about him learning the Z position and move around to give us some depth. He’s a great kid and continues to get better. Nobody works harder than he does.”

On what gave QB Ryan Willis the edge to win the starting job:

“He can make plays and is really talented thrower and has good instincts. The game is not too fast for him. When he is doing what he is supposed to be doing, with being on point and concentrating, when things are right, he can make every play. He is accurate with the ball and has a strong release. Instinctively in the passing game and anticipating windows with the touch on the ball, all those little things, he’s got that down. He played for us last year and did a good job with taking care of the ball. And that’s what he has to continue to do.”

On making 50/50 decisions and if he shown improvement in that area:

“I think he understands the system better now. Getting 10 games under his belt, there is nothing that replaces that experience. Just the simple execution of the plays he’s more comfortable with, which allows him to play faster. Every day and every series he will go out there and understands that it’s a battle between him and himself to focus and lock in on the details with what he needs to do. Yes, his instincts and talent make him want him to push the envelope, so he has to find the right times to do that. He will have to be careful with that.”

On if it’s easier for a running back to play right away and if RB Keshawn King could contribute this season:

“Yeah, I think skill players in particular do have the easiest spot to play early, because you don’t have to be as big and strong as the guys in the trenches that do most of the blocking. But for [Keshawn King], we’ll have to see what he can handle and we can put him in there to do. But he’s certainly a guy that is going to be in the mix for us hopefully. He just has to continue to come on and become a guy that can do everything. But until we get to that point, we have to be careful. Ultimately our job is to coach these guys up and put them into position to succeed and let their talent and skill take over.”