

**Virginia Tech Football**  
**Head Coach Justin Fuente Q&A Highlights**  
**Media Availability**  
**August 22, 2019**

***Opening statement***

“I don’t have any new updates on Brock [Hoffman]. There has been dialogue between compliance and the NCAA, but that’s all that I have on that. Ryan [Willis] will start at quarterback Hendon [Hooker] will be the backup. I’m really happy with both of those guys. I think Hendon has put a tremendous amount of work in and improved greatly. I feel really comfortable with him, but Ryan is a little more consistent right now and has some experience as well. I feel good about both of them. Quincy [Patterson] will be the third guy. He continues to work hard and develop. We’ll see how all of those roles play out.”

***On how did Ryan Willis take the news that he had to compete for a starting spot after starting the final 10 games of 2018:***

“Well, we do that at every position. I don’t know why anybody treats quarterbacks differently from any other position. It’s the same thing at right tackle. My obligation is to play the best players, so if that’s at corner or quarterback, you have to go compete for your opportunity. You don’t get to rest on your laurels at any position. Continue to work and try and improve yourself. That doesn’t mean that there aren’t exceptions to rules, I understand that, but it’s an everyday every week event for us at every position.”

***On the strides Willis has made on trying not to do too much and playing within the system:***

“That is a fine line, first of all. You want people to be aggressive and try to make plays and also understand that thigs aren’t always going to go your way on the field, especially at that spot. Finding that balance of trying to squeeze things into tight looks, or being able to throw the ball where a guy can get it if it is a tight look. There are small nuances of ball location anticipation. I think he’s continuing to improve, but it’s hard to really get a handle on that until you’re in a game. We try our best to simulate everything we can, but the best evaluator is playing.”

***On whether they switched from camp mode to focusing on BC:***

“We’re in both right now. We’re still in the middle of camp, working some good vs. good, but also turning a little bit of our attention to Boston College. We’ll go through our mock weekend on Saturday and Sunday this year. It’s kind of our dress rehearsal for meetings, practice and all of that sort of stuff. We are moving that way.”

***On getting used to morning practices for the first time of his career:***

“This was the first time that I have ever done it in the spring and it will also be the first fall that I have also done it. It’s not the kids that I’m worried about, they enjoyed it in the spring. What’s really difficult is game plan wise on Tuesday. Tuesday’s practices are now five to six hours earlier than it used to be. That chunk of time you’re not game planning. The time for preparation for your Tuesday practice is minimized so you have to get more done on Sunday,

which we won't have a problem doing. There are some things from the coach's schedule that I'm anxious to see how it works out.

"I know when I was a coordinator what it took for me to feel comfortable with what we're doing, so the timeline has moved up a little bit. The players liked the schedule and the spring and like it right now, but we haven't started school yet. The biggest hurdle will probably be for the coaching staff in terms of game planning on a traditional week."

***On where has Willis developed the most this fall:***

"He continues to have an understanding of what we're trying to accomplish and what's going on, on the other side of the ball. He's been a talented thrower, he's a good athlete, but his continuation to evolve from a mental and emotional standpoint has been good for him.

***On having more ACC games towards the start of season and its effect on fall camp:***

"I don't think it's changed camp at all. I do think it's something that gets referred to more whether it's a conference game or a big non-conference game. It gets referred to more through the summer time and camp, but it doesn't change your schedule or the way that you're practicing. You don't prepare one way for a conference game and then another way for a non-conference game. You don't treat one opponent different from the other. I do think that when you do play a team as accomplished as Boston College for your first game, it gets everyone's attention throughout the summer and into fall camp."

***On would he rather have a less formidable non-conference game to start the season:***

"I've said this before, don't mind playing these games. I like the way we go about trying to prepare these guys to play early in the year. I'd like to play one of these games at home every now and again. We have to play them some time, so we might as well do it right out of the box."

***On players understanding concepts and nuances of the game:***

I would try to put it this way. There are a lot of subjects that people know quite a bit about. Anyone that has ever taught anybody something, realizes that it's another level of understanding to explain something to someone who doesn't have any prior knowledge and have them walk away understanding it. That's a different level of understanding your subject. Not all players are capable of getting to that level, but we try to get the ones that are to that level of understanding of what we are doing. It's not just how, but why. Not just I do that on this play, not just the technique of what I do, but why and how does that fit in to the bigger picture. Not everyone can get to that part of, but there are some that can and we try to push them to that."