

Virginia Tech Football
Head Coach Justin Fuente Q&A Highlights
Furman Postgame Press Conference
September 14, 2019

Opening statement:

“Alright, again thanks to everybody that came out. Thanks to the crowd for supporting our kids. I certainly appreciate it. I’m glad we don’t play anybody next week. Lots to work on. Positives, at halftime I thought we responded. We really did. It was a tough deal, nothing was going very well. We didn’t have much momentum and our kids responded and found a way to get the game won. I think Furman has a good squad. They’re going to have a good season. At times we played really well defensively. At times we played really well on offense, but not nearly consistent enough moving forward. We’ve got tons to work on and I want to get back to work.”

On RB Keshawn King’s offensive spark in the third quarter and his health status:

“He’s fine. You’ll talk to him today. He said he could go back in, one of those deals. They looked at it, he’s ok. He’s going to be sore. I was really, really excited about him. I thought he did a great job. He’s competitive, he’s tough. He’s not the biggest guy in the world but he runs hard. He’s elusive and was really productive today.”

On if there was a temptation to make wholesale changes at halftime:

“You always play through all those ideas in your mind. Disappointed that their stemming caused us to jump offsides. Our defense does it all the time and we practice against it all the time. That was pretty disappointing. Not all those sacks are on the offensive line. I don’t know how many there were, but obviously it wasn’t very good. We’ve got to understand where we’re protected and where we’re not at quarterback. So yes, is the answer, but also trying to evaluate exactly what’s happening, what we can improve and who needs to do what. Basically, I told them, the whole team at halftime we’re down by I think it was 11 points and we have control over how this goes. We can hang our heads and sulk or we can stand up and go compete and go do our best to rectify what happened in the first half. I don’t know that we wholly rectified it but we at least played well enough to find a way to get it back.”

On his thought process to stick with the same lineup in the second half:

“There’s not a tremendous amount. Do we take Tre Turner out? Because he’s over there inconsolable after he fumbled like he let the whole world down. My concern is getting him built back up so he can get ready and play. We thought the guys that we had - we did make a

change. We put [Luke] Tenuta in there at right tackle. We got Keshawn [King] more carries and move forward.”

On QB Ryan Willis’ interception and Furman not allowing him to get the ball downfield:

“We felt like that’s what they were going to do coming into the game was to keep the ball in front of them. Early in the game they gave us a little more pressure than we thought we’d get to start with. I would say across the board, we have got to play better. Ryan [Willis] certainly needs to continue to work to improve. He missed the big throw that ended up being an interception, had a guy open on the corner route, it was [Hezekiah Grimsley] I think. He just overthrew him. We felt like they would try to keep the ball in front of them. We did feel like that. That’s what they tried to do.”

On getting WR Tre Turner back involved after the fumble:

“We always want to get Tre [Turner] touches. He’s a good leader for us, too. He works really hard. Everybody respects him. We always want to get him involved in what we’re doing. We go over to him and tell him that we have to go play the next play. We have to put that behind. Nobody likes what happened, but you can’t do anything about it now. You don’t have to prove anything to anybody other than you’re tough enough to suck it up and go back out there and compete. He’s a competitive person. I told him I’ve thrown a lot more interceptions than he has fumbled in my career and he kind of smiled and I felt better that I was getting to him and he went out there and played his tail off.”

On the illegal onside kick ruling:

“I don’t really understand to be honest with you. I don’t know. I didn’t think the ball was going to go 10 yards is what I thought. I’ve never seen one kicked like that. Almost like what we called it as kids, watermelon style, where you just lay it down. They said they blocked our guy before the ball went 10 yards.”

On the play of the defensive line:

“We had to win that matchup. They do enough stuff offensively and have enough weapons to scare you to death. I’m telling you their quarterback is a really, really good player. Eighty-nine is a really good player. Their tailback is a good player. That was a must. We had to win the line of scrimmage to try to nullify some of those guys and for the most part we did.”