

**Virginia Tech Football**  
**Head Coach Justin Fuente Q&A Highlights**  
**Game 10 – Georgia Tech Media Conference**  
**Nov 6, 2017**

***Opening statement***

“It’s good to be back in Blacksburg. Obviously we had a tough loss and a physical and tough football game. I give a tremendous amount of respect to Miami, they have a pretty talented group there. We’ve got to turn the page and get ready for Georgia Tech and all the challenges that it brings. Obviously the triple option and the way they play defensively and special teams and all that sort of stuff. We were a little of schedule yesterday with the travel and everything. We got to the facility at three in the afternoon yesterday so we let the kids get a quick lift and some treatment and sent them home, so we didn’t actually meet as a team. I just felt like with everything that went into that travel that them getting some rest and all of that sort of stuff, we usually practice on Sundays so hopefully they get some rest and get ready because this is going to be a tough one this week; a tremendous challenge. We’ll need great leadership and a great week of preparation as we prepare for this one.”

***How does not having practice yesterday effect getting ready for Georgia Tech?***

“Well technically yesterday wasn’t an off (day) for them, by the time we got back... Usually on our Sunday practice we hit a lot of fundamentals in terms of special teams drill work we hit some seven on seven, good vs good with the focus on two-minute drill and that sort of stuff and then we usually do a little bit of prep for the upcoming week. I talked to the coordinators when we were sitting wherever we were waiting. There’s a small element of stuff that we didn’t hit that we would have usually hit on a normal Sunday but hopefully this time in the season, this late in the season with some of our veteran guys, particularly on the defensive side of the ball, hopefully we can overcome that. I certainly won’t use that as an issue or an excuse moving forward it’s just as the head coach you have to weigh the good and the bad and that’s what we do all the time every single week. Trying to get your team knowing what to do and feeling good and because of all that stuff I feel like that’s the best way to do it.”

***Bud (Foster) has talked in the past about devoting some time in the summer to get a head start on Georgia Tech, did you do any of that?***

“Well we allocate some of that time if they want to use it if Bud (Foster) wants to use it then that’s great. I think it’s always good to hit elements of that throughout the year whether it’s in spring or in fall camp to rehash the assignments and all that sort of stuff.”

***Georgia Tech has had some close losses this year, does it look like the Georgia Tech teams of the past?***

“Well from what I’ve seen it does. When you look at what they do offensively in terms of running the triple option and having plays off of plays. Just watch the Virginia game last week and the first play of the second half they kinda catch them over rotating and they’re out the back door for a big huge play. You watch them 10 plays later run a play action off of that same deal, it ended up being an interception but they had a guy running wide open down the middle of the field. They look like what I’ve always envisioned a really well coached tough triple option team to be. Defensively they continue to mix up their looks and give people problems. They play fewer snaps defensively in general terms because of their offense. You turn the Wake Forest film on Wake Forest’s offense vs Georgia Tech’s defense and their first possession is six minutes and 30-some-odd seconds left in the first quarter, I mean where did the whole first quarter go? Well Georgia Tech had the ball and its 3-0 but there’s six minutes left in the first quarter, so they do a great job. You know in terms of the type of game you’re going to play in you

know what you're going to get and they seem to be very well coached and playing hard and they have lost a couple close games. I don't know about you all but I've seen us lose two games to two really really good football teams in Miami and Clemson and I watched Georgia Tech darn near beat Miami so it's going to be a heck of a challenge."

***Winning the one-on-one battles was one of the biggest things you were worried about offensively against Miami. Outside of winning those battles what could you do as coaches to schematically to free up receivers?***

"Well we do quite a few things in terms of trying to handle man coverage. We have some scheme things that we do. We got quite a bit of cover three last week, which those things don't work into that. We'll continue to try find a way to handle leverages and handle schemes to try and get our guys the ball and hopefully get the ball delivered accurately and quickly."

***You said that the offensive line was on alert after the game against UNC. Are they back on alert after Saturday night's game and are you looking at any changes?***

"No, they played their hearts' out. It was the entire offense being put on alert after the North Carolina game. I just wasn't happy with the way that we played in terms of our intensity and toughness in the North Carolina game and they have responded two weeks in a row. One week we won and one week we didn't win. Those kids know that the level of play in terms of, I always stop short of the word 'effort' because I don't want to imply that they're not trying, but in terms of level of toughness and enthusiasm that we have to play with and they've done that two weeks in a row."

***What is your message to the team and how do you motivate them and get them ready to play?***

"Well usually when we have this press conference I have already delivered part of that so I would like for them to hear it from me first. I think just in general terms there is a lot for us to play for. I mean we have a chance to be – when you look at numbers and all that sort of stuff but just not even focused on the numbers – I mean we play football at Virginia Tech, a school that loves and supports its football program. We have an opportunity to have a very accomplished season, playing a better bowl game, send our seniors out the right way. We have a rivalry game several weeks from now, I mean there is a lot that goes into it. We're going to play a team that kicked our butts last year in our own stadium on Saturday. I know it's disappointing when you want to achieve something and you've come up short. The mark of any one, a true competitor a person whether it is football or life is how you handle adversity and how you respond to those things, how your leadership responds to those obstacles and the only way to get feeling better is to go play better. When you have disappointments there is only one solution that I know of. Whether it's football or life that's to roll your sleeves up and go back to work. I'm optimistic about our guys and it doesn't mean they aren't disappointed. They're disappointed and they had a long trip home and all of those sorts of things. I think it's good for them to get away for a little bit and come back tomorrow and be ready to get back to it."

***You mentioned Parker Osterloh has come a long way what was he dealing with and obviously he has had issues throughout his career staying healthy:***

"The biggest thing is that he was dealing with a back issue and I'm not sure that I can explain it but it just crept up on him and he missed a large portion of not all fall camp and the first four, five, six weeks of the season. He really could have just hung it up and said this is my last year and this is too much to come back from and he did not, he continued to work. He wanted to be with his team and now he's found an opportunity to help us contribute on the field and I'm awfully proud of him that it means that much to him. It's kinda like what we were talking about not being in the coastal division race what do you have to play for. I mean that's just another great example of guys that generally enjoy this team. Enjoy playing

the game knowing they may have limited opportunities to continue to play this sport and working hard to get back and trying to playing as hard as you can.”

***On the radio show you described C.J. Carroll as having a chronic foot thing, is it something that needs to be fixed after the season?***

“I’m going to answer this the best I can, but I’m not really sure. It has been fixed once and its just something he’s continuing to deal with. He’ll come and practice for a little bit and then not continue to practice anymore, not be able to continue through and again I’ve proved many times that I’m not a doctor. I just don’t know what the next step is. He’s trying to manage it. He’s wants to be a part of the, well he is a part of the team but he wants to participate, he wants to play and he’s just trying to get healthy enough to get out there and go. It’s similar to what he had last year but it’s been fixed but it’s still causing him issues. I know I’m speaking in general terms, mostly because I don’t really understand exactly what it is. I know he wasn’t to play and he comes out there and practices for a little bit and then it fatigues him and he just can’t continue to get better. This week we’ll see how he feels and how he does and if he’s cleared. It’s just going to kind of have to see I guess.”

***WR Drake Deiuiliis played the first half of the one game and got hurt, would he be eligible for a medical redshirt?***

“So Drake (Deiuiliis). Yes to answer your question, I do believe will be able to get a redshirt. He played in the Boston College game, pulled his hamstring in the bye week, then worked hard to get back, and then reinjured it. It’s just one of those deals. We were preparing to move forward with him playing a role and what we’re doing and he’s pretty frustrated and upset about it and I’m just trying to get him back.”

***You mentioned earlier about Georgia Tech how they limit possessions, from an offensive standpoint from Virginia Tech do you feel like you have to call the game a little bit differently?***

“Well I think that’s important that you’re efficient, I really do. It’s probably an overused term but your opportunities are going to be limited. I’ll never forget, this was not a triple-option team but when I was at TCU we played Wisconsin in the Rose Bowl and we were up in a low-scoring game but in the second quarter we ran three plays. We ended up winning the football game. The pressure I felt as the play caller when we did finally get the ball back. To be efficient on first down was something I had never really felt before in that game and that’s an extreme case. They scored or they faked a punt and whatever it was but we went three-and-out on one possession. In the second quarter we ran three plays and just that feeling of never knowing when you’re going to get it back and how important it is when your defense has been on the field trying to stop these guys for a long time. That’s creates some pressure. It’s a similar type instance where you’ve got to do a really good job of being efficient to help the football team out knowing that you’re going to get fewer opportunities.”

***How do you deal with getting treatment for a guy like Adonis Alexander when you have the circumstances that you had in regards to travelling?***

“There’s just not a lot you can do quite honestly. You try to get him back and get him into treatment. There’s really not much you can do sitting on a plane.”

***Did he have any pain dealing with the injury?***

“I don’t know how much pain he’s in. We weren’t doing anything for a large period of time so I guess that’s good but he wasn’t moving around much.”

***Are concerned about your slow starts in the first quarter?***

“Well would I like to score more in the first quarter; you bet. I mean I just go back to this, whether it’s the first quarter or the fourth quarter or whatever. We know what we are and how it has to be for us to have success. It’s just going to be hard. Things are going to be difficult. We’re not as explosive a football team as we were last year. Points will be harder to come by whether it’s the first quarter or the or the second quarter. I think part of that is because things have to be pretty perfect for us to have success right now. In the first quarter teams play you slightly different then they have other teams throughout the week. You have to try and get a handle on it. When you’re better or more established or older than those things don’t matter as much because you can overcome them with experience and talent and right now we’re just not there yet.”