

Miami (5-4, 4-2 ACC) 30, Virginia Tech (4-5, 2-3 ACC) 12

Sun Life Stadium | Miami Gardens, Fla.

Nov. 1, 2012

AI Golden Postgame Press Conference

On his impressions from the team's performance...

I'm excited. I feel like we healed up, I feel like we grew up. Holding them to 12 points is significant without Denzel [Perryman], without Deon [Bush], I think some other guys stepped up. I'm real proud of their effort and the fact that a lot of the young guys are not young anymore. They had a good look, they prepared well, we had good practices. I felt good coming into the game, and the kids responded.

On the importance of a bye week...

We all seemed fresh. Let's all be real - that was really hard. The first eight weeks, and the opponents we ended up playing out of conference and away, that was difficult. I just think last weekend we got them back. We only practiced two days in the bye week. Good sense of mind, good focus and good energy. I thought they were really resilient tonight. They were tough.

On the lopsided time of possession and score...

We had good field position because of one Duke [Johnson] return and a turnover I believe. Obviously there are a couple of red zone opportunities we didn't convert early, or it could have been even bigger at the half. Nobody got down. Even when we sputtered on offense in the third quarter, the whole third quarter basically - hats off to Virginia Tech, I thought they did a great job, they had a great scheme, gave us a lot of problems there - our guys hung in there and had some big drives to end the game.

On the play of the team's defense...

We held them to 12, and we gave up about a 75-yarder - it looked like he started here and ended up in Coral Gables. It was just one of those deals. Our MIKE linebacker was matching around and he fell down and it just opened up. I'm real proud of how resilient they were. We weren't great on third down on either side early in the game, but we ended up getting another takeaway down there on the goal line. There were a lot of guys who stepped up and really did a nice job for us when they got an opportunity today.

On being in first place in the Coastal Division...

It's critical. I know everybody wants us to be national champions yesterday and get back to the BCS games and all that, but the reality of it is that the pathway through that is the Coastal. It's almost like we have to re-educate our team that that's how you get there. You get there by getting to Charlotte, and then you have a 50-percent chance of going to a BCS game. That's what we have to do, we have to educate our team, because our fanbase doesn't really understand that right now. They look at the Notre Dame game and it's all in or bust. This game coming up against Virginia is critical. It's truly critical for us. We have to get focused, get right, and get back to work.

On the fourth quarter spark...

I think we stayed with it. We found a couple of runs that worked. It started with Rashawn's [Scott] conversion on the third-down play. That was big. He and Stephen [Morris] read each other's eyes and made a big play there, and then we got some runs going. I thought Mike [James] and Duke [Johnson] ran really hard, and then obviously knocked them off the ball a little bit.

On winning games without explosive plays...

We're better on defense. It showed that we're making enough plays on defense that we don't have to have prolific, explosive plays and still win. Obviously the punt block helped. We have to do a better job covering kicks, but it showed we could win in a different way. We didn't quite have enough against North Carolina to pull that one off. It's nice to do it this way.

On the improved play of the team defense...

I thought our defense hung in there. They did a great job in the redzone and ended up doing a good job on third downs late in the game. We got a couple of sacks, we started to get after their quarterback - that's critical, We haven't had that from a four-man rush. Olsen [Pierre] came up big the one time, and a couple other guys did a really nice job of getting to him. It makes all the difference in the world. Finishing with an interception was great.

On Deon Bush's injury...

Deon's been struggling with some stingers. We'll evaluate him, but I think the best thing to do was to shut him down. It was on fire for him. There was some pain. Denzel just wasn't quite right. We'll put him back in a boot, and hopefully in nine days he'll be ready in Charlottesville.

On a strong special teams performance...

They looked good in the return game. I think it was Gabe [Terry] that blocked it, right? We put him in a different position this week and challenged him, and Rayshawn [Jenkins] and those other guys, he just went out and did it as perfectly as you could do it. He stayed low, got his hand down nice and low. We missed on some of those opportunities earlier in the year. Mike [Barrow] has been working the heck out of it. Mike designed it, and the kids went out and executed it. I'm really excited we had a chance to do that finally.

On wearing orange uniforms with orange pants...

I wanted them to have fun. It was a tough eight weeks. We had a chance to get a break, catch up on school, and get healthy. I just wanted them to have fun. It was a little surprise for them. I think they were excited about it. I guess that means we have to keep wearing it, I don't know. It was good.

On the success of trick plays...

That was big. Dallas [Crawford] did a nice job, and he threw it really well. I guess you could argue he should have thrown it in the flat to Duke. But he made a decision and Kind of zinged it in there. I keep saying it, Dallas is coming on now. Dallas is starting to do a good job for us and grow up. I'm excited about Dallas. Obviously Dorsett made a great decision getting us some more depth and throwing it across the field to Stephen [Morris].

On the expectations inside his team's locker room...

We're trying to learn a process and get better. We've been focused on the Coastal. That's what our focus is right now. I'm glad I'm coaching at a place where the expectations are high. At the end of the day, When you can meet the expectations of your fanbase, you're going to be in a great spot. We're going to keep doing it. We just need a little bit of patience because of how young we are. We're growing up. Guys are fighting hard, they're working, they're getting better. I'm excited. A lot of guys stepped up today that hadn't - Curtis Porter, Jalen Grimbale, Tracy Howard early in the game, [Rayshawn] Jenkins in his coverage. I can go on and on. Guys stepped up, and guys that are going to be here for a long time, and I'm excited about that.

Miami Players Postgame Press Conference**TE Clive Walford****On being open for catches**

It felt good out there, just going hard. I was trying to be an X-factor and a big target for my quarterback.

On his offensive role

I think we did ok, it could have been a lot better. There were a lot of times where we stopped ourselves, on the other hand, we were going against a good defense, so it was kind of tough.

On the play of the defense

It was awesome, we weren't holding our side of the bargain and that forced the defense to have to step up, and they held us down.

WR Rashawn Scott

On the play of the offense

We had a great practice this week. Out of the whole year I felt like this was the best practice and I felt like we wanted it more. Everybody was all in, so nothing could stop us.

On having a long break

Everybody rested. Everybody wasn't angry eyed. They put their egos aside and we went all in.

The team feeling in the locker room

It's crazy in there, just the intensity.

On the big third down catch

It wasn't even my position. I was just out there running around. We had Phillip go deep, and Hurns go deep, and I just happened to be open in the flats. We talked about it on the sideline and someone needing to step up before the game gets out of hand, and it just happened to present itself like that.

On the Coastal division and controlling your own destiny

It feels great that we can control it and nothing can really stop it but ourselves. It gets us going. Another good game next week will just push us farther ahead. We have to go out this week and practice better than we did this week.

What a win does to the team's confidence

We're young and we're growing so that just makes the confidence even higher. The defense played great and the offense responded.

On the play of the defense

It just makes us want to challenge them more in practice. It is always a crucial practice. They have become better throughout the year.

Stephen Morris

On how the bye week helped myself and the team...

The bye week helped a lot of things. It obviously helped my ankle, it helped a lot of people who were injured. Mentally it just helped me focus, take a step back and look at what's important in life.

On leading the Coastal Division...

Ever since we moved into the ACC no [Miami] team has won the ACC or the Coastal Division. Our focus is winning this game, winning the ACC Coastal and going into the championship. I take it really personal. We do it for the seniors who have never won a championship, and who have never been able to call themselves champions.

On the uniform color scheme...

I loved it. I think it was a great move by coach Golden. It changed the attitude and put us in a great mood.

Duke Johnson

On his health...

This is the healthiest I've been all year. I've been taking treatments for the past month, month and a half and I'm feeling 100 percent now.

On beating Virginia Tech in November on Thursday night...

It's great just because it's the end of the season. This game really helped us in the ACC race. This game isn't about what month, it's about the game that we're playing.

On the feeling in the locker room after the win...

We're excited just to come out and be in the driver seat of the Coastal, but we know we can't let up because we still have more games to win.

Eddie Johnson

On the defensive effort tonight...

It was the first game that we all played together as a team on special teams, defense and offense. So it was big for all of us to come together.

On what inspired them in tonight's performance...

Everyone was locked in and focused on what they had to do. That was the state of the locker room. It's going to be common to give up a play and lose a few yards, but we have to do what we have to do.

Ladarius Gunter

On playing a complete game...

We practiced hard all week and we wanted to bring that same intensity to the game and we did that and made plays.

On his interception...

They did exactly what we watched on film. The coaches just told me to look at number one to come off a wheel route and the play was right there for me to make.

Virginia Tech Head Coach Frank Beamer

I don't fault our effort. I do fault our execution. For whatever reason, we're having trouble putting it together. When you play a team game, everybody's got to be together. We're a little bit off here and a little bit off there, and the end result is you don't do things to win a football game. We had good preparation, I think our players and coaches put a lot of effort into this thing, and we just didn't do the things to win a football game. I give Miami credit. They have talented kids, they're doing a good job with those guys, and they beat us.

Concerned about production of offense after a bye week?

We just didn't produce points. Again, we had, how many, 400-something yards, but points is the name of the game. And turning the ball over in the red zone twice? That's what I'm talking about, execution. Defensively we gave up a couple of long plays. Execution. We got a punt blocked, a guy bobbles the ball, and get a punt blocked. Execution. Kickoff coverage - we got a guy that gets out of position and all of a sudden it pops on us. Execution. And again, for this football team, it hurts because we're so close, and you take four or five plays and all of a sudden that gets the game going the other way. I don't think it's effort. I don't think it's lack of effort. You've got to make plays.

On Miami running seven offensive plays in the first quarter...

I think it just fit into the whole picture. All of us here - coaches, players, everyone - could've done some things better. But you look at the big plays, the turnovers in the red zone and the ball that pops out there for a long gainer on defense. It's just a little bit here, a little bit there.

On Logan Thomas's performance...

I think he's kind of like the rest of the team. I thought he played tough as heck, and put in the effort, and had three plays he'd like to have back. And that could probably be said by just about everybody on our football team. You don't get them back, though. You've got to make them when you have the chance.

On motivation after the end of hopes for an ACC Championship and the ending of the 10-win season streak...

I think the greatest thing you can play for, when it's all said and done, is pride. When it looks tough, you really see what people are made out of, and things are really tough right now. We've probably got the best team in the ACC coming next Thursday, and a tough loss. So things are tough. But pride and trying to get to a bowl game. We've still got that to play for.

Could you have imagined, nine games in, that you'd be using those two things as motivation?

I've always said there's a thin line between being okay and not okay. I think sometimes you just assume you should win 10 games and that should happen. But it doesn't just happen. You get in there with some inexperienced players at times but this late in the season that's certainly no excuse either. Just not quite clicking. It's a team game and we're just not quite clicking. I think everyone's trying as hard as they can, but it's very frustrating, very disappointing. I know our fans are disappointed and I'm disappointed because we're disappointing them. But we're trying to get this thing right. You've got to just keep hanging in there and it's going to turn around.

On getting so few rushing yards against Miami's defense...

Sometimes a three or four yard run, that's a good run depending on how the defense is playing and so forth. And we had a few of those, but there's no question that we'd like to run the ball better. There's no question about that. But we've said that for a long time too.

Concerned about the special teams?

We spend a lot of time on that, but it's pretty simple: the punters catch the ball, and you kick it. When you've got a lane in a kickoff coverage, you stay in that lane. It's pretty simple, and we spend a lot of time on that. You just execute. Our football team, if you just think about it, you just execute.

I think all of us take responsibility for this. I think everybody in our room takes responsibility. Again, to me, it's one of those things that meant a lot to everybody here. We're trying hard, it's just a little bit here and a little bit there.

And when you play a team game, everybody's got to be together and you get that momentum and all of a sudden it starts rolling, and we never did that. We fumbled the ball at the one-yard line when it's a one-score game.

We were going to go for two. I don't want to take anything away from Miami, but we gave them great field position twice. And then a long run. So you really feel that if you get the game tied up, you've got the momentum. It just didn't happen.

On dealing with the frustration...

I look at it as what's wrong, and let's fix it. We haven't gotten it fixed yet but we're not going to give up trying, I'll tell you that.

Virginia Tech Players Postgame Press Conference

Vincent Painter-RT

Did you ever think that at this point in your senior year you'd be playing for pride?

You never go into a season thinking that. You always go into the season thinking the best.

What went wrong with the red zone offense?

I can't really put my finger on it right now. We have to figure out as a team once we get to the film room Saturday morning. As of right now I can't put my finger on it.

How disappointing is it to be turning out yards for second straight game but not getting points out of it?

It hurts, it really does hurt to drive the ball up and down the field like that and not getting any points. It hurts as an offense, it hurts as a lineman.

Antone Exum-CB

How do you stay motivated in these last few games?

Pride. We still have three games left, we need to win two games to make it to a bowl game. We haven't not made it to a bowl game in forever here at Tech. We have to make sure that doesn't happen. But like I said pride and heart nobody wants to go out losing, nobody wants to lay down for anybody. We're not going to lay down for anybody. We are going to give it our best shot play our hearts out. I know I am.

Talk about the Florida St game?

I haven't even thought about those guys yet. I'm just thinking about heading out there.

Where you surprised how you came out after a bye week in the 1st quarter with the special teams mistakes, is that shocking to everyone on the sideline?

Whenever we make mistakes like that, it could really cost you. It's kind of shocking to us. We definitely don't want those things to happen to us but when they happen you have to deal with it and we need to do a better job of doing that.

Jack Tyler-LB

Is it frustrating to get stops and not have the offense put up points?

It's frustrating but at the same time it's nothing we can't handle on defense, it's out of our hand. We just have to do what we have to do and that's make stops. Giving up 30 points isn't going to win a game either.

Now that you can't play for ACC title what will you use to motivate yourself?

Well really we have a big game next week against Florida State, in our house. It's another Thursday night game, and another game that we all came here to play. If that's not motivating enough, I don't know what is.

How much do you want to knock them off?

That would be huge. That will at least put some of this losing in the back of our heads, so we can move on, move forward, try to get a winning streak going and try to get into a bowl game.