

October 10, 2020

Virginia vs. NC State

Scott Stadium (Charlottesville, Va.)

Bronco Mendenhall Press Conference

Opening Statement:

“Certainly not the outcome I was hoping for today. We started very slow. I think that both teams were pretty evenly matched going into the game. However, we turned the ball over four times - one for a touchdown and we had a blocked punt and then a failed attempt from the one-yard line with two plays to push it in. And rather than making it more than that, there's plenty of things still to follow up on. We started slow. Those six plays in and of themselves were the difference in the game, but lots and lots of things can be improved from where I thought we were. And today made it clear that we weren't as far along as I anticipated.”

On Brennan Armstrong's hit and bringing Lindell Stone into the game at QB:

“Yeah, I was just told that Brennan (Armstrong) was out for the game. I don't know any more information at this point. I thought Lindell (Stone) did a really nice job of leading our team and giving us a chance to fight back and possibly change the outcome and come from behind. So, I think he did a really nice job showing a lot of courage, a lot of grit and saw the field well. I think our team also responded well just seeing his effort.”

On the need for a big play that didn't come to change the course of the game:

“I think that's a really good assessment. It was as if everyone was waiting and just knowing that it's going to happen, but it didn't. And, and so that was the reality. We needed it to happen and it didn't happen. And so, you know, we needed a few key stops on defense and it didn't happen. We needed a touchdown from the one and it didn't happen. We just weren't consistent enough and didn't execute well enough and didn't earn the victory. Bottom line (we) didn't make the plays we needed to. And it never felt like the game would get away from us. It just seemed like one or two plays and we'd be right back in it and have a chance to win at the end. But there were enough miscues, either through not getting a great punt at the right time or kicking a ball out of bounds or a turnover for a touchdown or driving the ball and we turn it over. There's just way too many miscues to change the outcome of the game today.”

On the emotion after the game and his messaging to his team

“I talked more than I normally talk in that setting because after the game there's so many emotions and I can be wrong, a lot, you know, with Brennan (Armstrong) coming off the field like that. But I didn't think that we approached the game as we normally do in our own stadium and we've been so successful over the past couple of years. I'm not going to say or not going to jump to the conclusion they took it for granted, but we just didn't prepare, compete or execute at a level well enough to maintain the outcome that we wanted. And that really was the answer. I do think the second half our team played more competitively, with a better mindset and more urgency.”

“But a half isn't enough, or parts of a half isn't enough. We are certainly learning to sustain - start to end - clean football, competitive football and effective football to have the outcome that we want.”