

December 12, 2020

Virginia vs. Virginia Tech
Postgame Quotes

Head coach Bronco Mendenhall

On lack of productivity and efficiency on offense:

“Virginia Tech played the run against us very well. Coverage variety and different looks made us more hesitant than normal and that affected our execution. Certainly a big game, lots of emotion, a unique setting and a challenging setting, and then just some variety of different looks, that are happening during the play and I think all those things compounded just to not make us as consistent.”

On halftime deficit and what said to team:

“Yeah, there wasn't a lot of screaming and yelling or anything else, it was just execution. We gave up to giant plays on defense, and we were inconsistent on offense. So it was just a matter of executing our way back into the game. When we closed it within 30 to 15, it looked like, yeah, that could be a really strong finish and I'm a competitive ending. Then some turnovers gotten away from there.”

On emphasis on the rivalry game:

“It's immediate motivation to get it right the next time. It's our goal and desire to win the state, every single year. Not every other year or less frequently than that. It doesn't happen unless it's intentional. It doesn't happen if it's just a regular game. So, yeah we're motivated already to get back to work.”

On touchdown just before halftime:

“Yeah, really frustrating because it looked like, I was all the way across the other side of the field, but it looked like an out-cut that we pushed him out of bounds, which we didn't push him out of bounds. It was hard to even imagine that happened. So really frustrating and certainly an execution mistake on our part.”

On if defense struggles due to injuries or poor execution:

“Hard to say, which is, dialing exact percentages but it clearly is both. It's not only a consistent compliment of personnel, but it's also the execution and in real time and under the circumstances in the game of plays that have to be made. So it's both.”

On way team performed:

“I think it hurts, kind of, no matter what. The things that are controllable, that we didn't control, which again really comes down to the precision and the assignment soundness and the consistency. Those are the things that I always take personally and like to see at an elite level. That didn't really reflect how we played from beginning to end.”

Sophomore LB Nick Jackson

On vibe on defense going into halftime:

“Just have to make plays and get off the field, simple as that really. Just have to come out and play harder.”

On how team feels now after momentum built during season:

“It hurts. We poured our hearts into this season, poured our hearts into this game and it hurts. It's a chip on my shoulder, going into the offseason, going into this next bowl game, going into whenever we choose to play. I'm excited. Definitely use it as momentum. Definitely gonna use it with an edge. Whoever we play next, got to.”

On needing defense to make plays tonight:

“We always preach about havoc. We always want to have havoc. I don't think we caused enough havoc tonight. I think we played hard. We played our hearts out.”

Senior WR Terrell Jana

On offensive production:

“Obviously, you'd like to have more production on our side, and I think we put the defense in tough position, not holding the ball on enough not making plays. They're on a field for a long time. The time of possession was pretty off balance. I think just as a wide receiver I just got to keep doing more for Brennan and for the o-line, who will constantly do so for us to give us time to get open. Pitch and catch we usually do. That wasn't a good reflection of who we are as an offense, as a team. I think that's gonna hurt us moving forward. I think that's an opportunity for us to see how, these opportunities, games only come one time, so you make the most of it. I know next year this team's gonna do everything they can to prepare for the game and to make the most of it when it comes.”

On mood in the locker room:

“I think everyone's obviously disappointed. We really wanted to win here in this stadium. Now, going back home, UVA doesn't lose at home. So I look forward to next year, seeing this team play. Obviously, we lost the game, so everyone's pretty mad and upset. I think again it's a good lesson, you know, sometimes you need a lesson like this to remind us, because we've been programmed to go up, up and up. So it's a good reminder. Just a good humbling and hopefully we use it moving forward.”

On going to a bowl game:

“I think, my teammates voted me as captain, they put their trust in me. So for me it's, whatever they want to do, is what I want to do. I don't want to force guys that don't want to play football into a game. And also, I don't want to take that opportunity away from them. I know this would be one of the few teams that goes to four bowl games in a row, and then I don't think any team has ever gone five in a row. So I don't want to take the opportunity away from the guys below us, but at the same time, I just want to hear them out, hear what they want to say, and as a team we will come together and make a decision.”