

Head Coach Scott Satterfield Postgame Virginia

(Opening Statement)

“We kick the field goal to go up 17 and you feel pretty good about having a game in hand. We were running the ball good in the second half, but it’s to their credit. With that quarterback and they got some really good skill players, they were able to get back in that game. We took a shot there in the fourth quarter, but didn’t come up with it, we were trying to get a touchdown there and you end up punting after going three and out. There’s a bunch of plays you look back on it, obviously, we’d like to play better in a lot of different scenarios. They ended up running 86 snaps, we had 62, that’s a big difference there. I thought we got wore down a little bit defensively there in the last couple of drives. We were in in good shape, a couple of fourth downs and they end up making the plays. These games are crazy, coming down to the end like they are. You have to find a way to make one more play, and that’s what it was tonight. It’s very similar to last week. One more play is what we needed. I’m proud of our offense there at the end to just give us a chance there. It was good job with 22 seconds to come back and give us an opportunity. But that one hurt, two in a row like that. You’re sitting there with two plays in both of those games and you’re sitting at 5-1 instead of 3-. But, a lot of ball left to play, a lot of fight in front of us. We know this league is wide open and we know it’s very balanced so you’re going to have to come out and play great football to get a win.”

(On what they did different in the fourth quarter to narrow the gap)

“I don’t know, they completed some balls. It’s kind of hard to tell. I thought we were in pretty good shape sometimes and they’d complete another pass and get down the field. They have a really good passing attack. They threw it 61 times and it’s hard to create that pass rush, because Yasir (Abdullah) for example, is one of our best pass rushers, but he can’t rush 61 times, he’s going to get wore out. Ashton (Gillotte) played a little bit tonight, but not much and he’s our second best pass rusher. We’re trying to mix it up and bring some pressure but then you are playing man-to-man on the outside and you have some mismatches and those guys made some plays. Ultimately, they just made more plays in the last couple of drives.”

(On relying on the three man rush)

“Like I mentioned, if you do bring pressure then you’re going to be playing some more man-to-man and then hopefully the ball comes out quick. And we were able to get some pressure a couple of times on that. The ball comes out and we made some plays and that’s why I think we got them to two fourth downs on that last drive because of that. Whenever you go back and look at the film, we’ll see. With the three-man rush, the thought is you have eight guys to cover their four or five guys and now hopefully you’re covering up those zones. Now (Brennan) Armstrong does a great job, when he sits back there and has time, he is very poised and does a great job of finding somewhere in that zone where those guys were open. I thought he did a great job with that. Now we’ll go back and look, do you bring more pressure and just make him get the ball out of his hands quicker? Obviously, that’s something to look at, particularly when they throw it 61 times.”

(After two tough endings in a row, what do you take into the bye week?)

“We just have to get better. We got to continue to grow as a football team and find ways to make one more one or two more plays. We got the bye next week and we got to heal up. We have a lot of guys

that are dinged up and we got to heal up. Hopefully next week we'll be able to heal some of these guys up, Renato (Brown) didn't play, Ashton (Gillotte) didn't play much tonight. (Marshon) Ford went out at halftime, came back right there at the very end. There are several others that are dinged so we have to heal up and we have to continue to get better. We're doing some good things, we got to build off of those good things and eliminate the things we're not doing well. We have Boston College coming in here in two weeks. We know we're going to get everything they have, the best shot out of those guys and we got to figure out a way to play better and to make those plays."

(On the play of Hassan Hall today)

"He's another guy that's been dinged up, so he didn't play as much in the running back position. Tonight we were able to put him in and we felt we could get some outside zone going and he did a great job of hitting that and busting out some great runs. He's a guy that has speed, we know he can get it done. We have several guys that can get it done. At halftime we didn't do a good job as coaches at getting the ball to our running backs. I think our running backs only had 11 carries, we have to do better than that, so we made more of an effort in the second half to get the ball to these running backs and let's see what they can do. They did a good job. We want to be more like this, we want to be more balanced. We had 270 yards passing and 233 rushing. That way they can't just defend one thing. It was nice to see other guys making plays, that's certainly a positive as we head into the bye week."

(On Brennan Armstrong and his four 400+ passing yard games this year)

"Well, they throw the ball a lot, that's number one. He gets a lot of opportunity but having said that, you wouldn't do it if he couldn't get it done. He's a very accurate passer; he throws a really catchable football. They have some good skill players, their tight end, No. 99, three went down tonight, he got hurt, but he's an excellent receiver, number four in the slot. He's got great poise and I think he's got great confidence. He's a guy that feels like he can make the plays, he doesn't get rattled and that was evident on the last round with two fourth downs. He threw the ball in there really nice and that's what makes him a good player. I think he's one of the top passers in the country right now, but having said that, we have to figure out a way to get off the field; we have to figure out a way to make him a little bit more uncomfortable, whatever that means, bringing pressure or whatever. Obviously, we'll go back and look at the tape but as you play teams like that, we've played the three top 10 offenses this year out of six games. It's been hard on our defense and hopefully we'll get better because of it."

(On James Turner and the missed field goal at the end of the game)

"No, it was not out of his range. He's actually been perfect inside of 50 his career. That was 49 right there, I think in the first half that one was 40 something, I'm not sure how long it was, but he's knocked all of down in his career, we have great confidence in him, and he's knocked down a lot of failed goals. That's one of the things I was a little disappointed in offensively tonight, we had to settle for field goals. We want to get down toward the red zone to score touchdowns, and that was the disappointing thing offensively."

(On Malik Cunningham's rushing being contained)

"If you go back and look what he's done to Virginia, I know over the last two years, he's over 100 yards rushing and they didn't want him to run the football and that was part of what their plan was so, we felt if that was their plan then our running backs should be free and I think that's why we wanted to get the

ball to those guys and let them carry the football. We didn't call many Q runs because of that, the way they were setting their ends and bringing there outside linebackers wide for the quarterback runs, and then let the running backs run so, I think it's probably a little of both.”

(On Virginia’s ability to complete passes)

“I think it was a little bit of everything. I think there were times where he squeezed the ball into windows and made those throws, there were times we had guys on their backs and they made the catch, there was other times when they were sitting in a zone and they were free and open, and I think he did a good job of finding those guys in those windows so, I think it was a little bit of everything. Obviously, we have to control what we can control, which is being in our right spots, making it hard on them to be able to make those plays, because sometimes the offense will make those plays but we need to make it harder on them.”

(On when the momentum shifted in the game)

“I think maybe the drive when they got within three, maybe right in there, you kind of felt it a little bit there. We wanted to go back out and obviously do something offensively, but we didn't get it done on that particular drive. That would have been huge at that point in the game, then we end up giving the ball back to them and obviously we know what happened, but you have to grab it somewhere, you have to grab that momentum somewhere. I thought Hassan's (Hall) run, the long run, that was that was part, I thought hey, we're back, we're back in it, we got it down in plus territory. We wanted to make them spend their timeouts so, we did that, they used all three timeouts. Obviously, we want to try to score touchdowns, we needed one more first down, but it's a fine line. Do you try to throw it and risk an incompleteness, now they have a timeout or maybe two. We were running the ball well, so we said let's run it and make them burn their timeouts and hopefully we get a first down. That was disappointing that we didn't get one more first down because that could have iced the game, but you had to take the field goal right there because it's a three-point game, now we go up six and make them drive the ball with no timeouts. We'll dissect the mess out of this game as we go back and look at it, it's so close, it came down to the wire so I know there's a lot of things we could have done better.”