

University of Tulsa Football Media Conference

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Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA

Ryan Switzer

Press Conference



Florida Atlantic 63, Tulsa 16

RYAN SWITZER: Okay, hats off to those guys on the other side, man. I thought they did a great job, especially early of really controlling the line of scrimmage both offensively and defensively.

Really unfortunate for the seniors on this team. I just told them some of the scores that we've had, some of the results we've had this year really haven't been indicative of the group of kids and the group of young men that's been in that locker room.

I was fortunate this week to be able to share this moment with them. Sometimes you don't get rewarded for your work and your efforts, but that doesn't mean that you didn't do right.

There's a group of kids in that locker room that are hurting, but there's a group of kids in that locker room that have endured and that have faced adversities and that have showed up consistently week in and week out with a great attitude and a great approach. For that I'm very grateful.

We've got a great group of young guys in that locker room. We've got a great group of guys who still have a lot of football ahead of them. No matter what that score says, I'm still very much excited about what we're going to continue to do here and what we're going to build.

For that, I will open up for questions.

Q. By most counts the players responded to you really well during the week, to your enthusiasm. What did you sense was the disconnect between how they responded in the week and how they played today?

RYAN SWITZER: Yeah, that's been an issue for us, to be honest with you. Like I said, I thought early we couldn't get the run game going. They were controlling the line of scrimmage. I thought that kind of threw us off a couple times.

We got in some obvious passing down situations, which hurt us. Defensively just pinpoint, without watching the tape, a lot of missed tackles, a lot of missed fits a lot of open gaps.

Again, I take full responsibility of everything that happened out there today. The kids fought, had great effort, they competed. Guys were forcing fumbles on the last drive.

Ultimately the result falls on me. I'm okay with that. I'll accept that I didn't have them as prepared to play. But really proud of the finish and effort that those guys showed.

Q. What went into the decision to start Cooper?

RYAN SWITZER: We just felt like we needed from a run game standpoint, maybe from a protection standpoint, if he could get out of the pocket, maybe extend some plays. He did a couple times.

Obviously we had some turnovers and we had some missed throws early. But Coop, man, the last couple weeks you couldn't have asked more from how much he's battled. I mean, this kid has come in on Sundays, limped up, bruised up because of some of the hits. He just shows up the next day and goes to work, just shows up the next day and goes to work. Very much proud of the effort that he showed, especially the latter half of the season and the year.

But the thought was just maybe we needed to get out of the pocket a little bit, maybe we needed to from a run game standpoint have another threat. That's kind of the decision that we made.

Q. What can you say about the way the senior guys performed throughout the entire year?

RYAN SWITZER: Yeah, I mean, my sole focus this week has just been on the kids and giving those guys the best opportunity to come out with a different result than we got today.

Very proud of Kam, very proud of the entire group and those seniors. It's unfortunate that it ended up the way that it did.



There is a lot of success and a lot of good things in those young men's futures on and off the field. I know for certain just with the nine months that we've spent with them and seeing their approach to every day and seeing how they treat people, seeing how they respond to tough moments.

Like I said, we didn't get the result, we haven't got the result. That falls on me. I can't fault the kids for what they did tonight and how much effort they showed, as lopsided as that score was.

Q. You kind of mentioned during the week you had developed a special relationship with Kam. What did it mean to you to see him score that touchdown in the third?

RYAN SWITZER: Yeah, I mean, I wish it would have came in a different outcome.

But Kam, he has embodied everything that I believe we are trying to build here just with his character, with how he works, with how he treats people, with how he takes care of his body, with what he does outside of the facility.

Everything that he does is who we should strive to be - coaches, staff, players - because you win with those types of kids, you win with that type of buy-in.

That was a great moment for him. He had a great year, man. He battled through some injuries. He was a horseman for us, especially early when we were looking for that type of two and three in the receiver room and offensively. He stepped up.

I fully believe his best days are ahead of him and I can't wait to see what he does from here on out.

Q. Over the next few weeks, what kind of role do you expect you're going to be having with players that are weighing going into the portal, their options? Have you had conversations with Justin as far as your future with the program?

RYAN SWITZER: Yeah, I mean, our ultimate job and our ultimate goal is to keep the guys that we have, to keep the young core that we have. We have a great young core, man. We really do. They're the future of this program. We have a great '25 class. The future is bright with those pieces.

It will be a challenge in this day and age in college football. I'm still getting used to what all of it brings with the transfer portal and all of this stuff.

We'll do our absolute best to make sure those guys are taken care of and make sure they know they have a home here. Again, we got great leadership in place. I'm very confident in where we're going and where we'll end up being.

But it will be a good challenge for us. That's all. It will be a good challenge for us the next couple of weeks to make sure that we keep the guys that we have, retain the young core of the roster, kind of go from there.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, coach.

RYAN SWITZER: Appreciate it, guys. Thanks.

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