

Rutgers University Football Media Conference

Saturday, October 9, 2021
Piscataway, New Jersey, USA

Greg Schiano

Postgame Press Conference



Michigan State 31, Rutgers 13

GREG SCHIANO: Okay, guys, I'll try to help you any way I can.

Q. Would Noah have gone back in the game if it was a closer score at the end or was he injured?

GREG SCHIANO: Right now we're figuring it out. He was injured. With time it felt better. We asked him to throw. I didn't see any of this. I was coaching. And we looked at it and Sean just didn't feel like he was sharp enough to put back in the game, so...

We'll see how that is tomorrow.

Q. Any update on Aaron?

GREG SCHIANO: He has a shoulder. I'm not sure how bad it is yet. We'll know that tomorrow. But it was bad enough that he couldn't play anymore.

Q. I know it wasn't just the offense that was the problem today. You struggled to score in the red zone, two top play-makers out. What level of concern do you have with that unit overall right now?

GREG SCHIANO: I look at this game, we gave up big plays. We gave up four big plays. We haven't done that. We haven't given up big plays. You give up big plays, it's going to be hard to do anything, right? You're behind the eight ball.

I thought we did some things offensively that I was happy with. We are missing some guys, but that's the way college football goes, right? You have to play with who you have.

Uncharacteristically we had seven penalties today. I think we had four holding calls. That's something we've been really good at, we've worked really hard at. It's hard to understand why, right? You go five games... It's not like we didn't play elite competition. Sometimes the elite

competition will raise your penalties.

But that hurt us today. If you think about some of those drives, then you get grabbed like that. But it's tough. We have a group of guys that are really working hard and didn't get discouraged. They knew they were a little shorthanded today and they went and fought.

I thought we had an opportunity to win. We had an opportunity to win for the better part of this football game even though we didn't play well in areas. Some guys did play well, but in areas we didn't play well enough to win and that's why we didn't win.

But it was still a game for the better part of the game. That to me shows that we just got to keep going. It's not time to panic. Got a lot of football left. After six games, we're back to neutral. So here we go.

Q. Was there anything in the first half with Nailor that you just didn't execute? 200 yards in the first half. Better job of shutting him down in the second.

GREG SCHIANO: A lot of things, yeah (smiling). No doubt there was, yeah.

You know, one of the things that we talk about is eye discipline. In football you have to keep your eyes where they're supposed to be. When you don't, you can get in trouble. That's exactly what happened to us. We just didn't have great eye discipline.

When you do that, it's not where you do something that's really bad. You're really actually trying to help more. But you have to do your job. Your job is to keep your eye on that guy. When you don't, it can affect you.

Q. What does it mean to you to have Eric inducted into the Hall of Fame this weekend?

GREG SCHIANO: I think that's really special. It's well-deserved and really represents what Rutgers, what I believe Rutgers is all about. Just hard-working, tough, relentless people. Eric represents that better than anyone I've ever met. His positive outlook on life, even though he's been dealt the worst hand you can imagine, that just says



everything to me.

When I heard that had happened, really, really happy for him and his family. Like I said, well-deserved.

Q. Will you have him speak to the team this season?

GREG SCHIANO: At some point. He always does. He comes around. He sees our team more than a little.

He's a great inspiration to a lot of people.

Q. You mentioned obviously being at the midway point of the season. What do you want to see next in the next six games to get back to the consistent level you were at?

GREG SCHIANO: I don't really think of it as six games. I think of it as one game. We have one game, and that's Northwestern next week. We have a lot of work between now and then.

When I addressed the team in my own head I'm saying, All right, we got good things, early game, we got to get everybody feeling a little bit better, we got to figure out what we can do better, who else can we fit into this mix.

We have a lot of good players. We need to get everybody playing. Everybody that can contribute has to be playing. We're moving in that direction. Everybody's got to help.

The good thing is I think we have a team and a group of guys that is unselfish and that wants nothing more than to win these games. They're going to do whatever we ask them to do. That's a trait that as a head coach you're very, very appreciative of.

Q. Elijah, Kyonte, Desmond, how encouraging is it to get to see guys...

GREG SCHIANO: Those are some of the guys I'm talking about. Now, Christian got banged up. So in goes Des. I thought he did a good job, right?

I think when you have opportunities, those guys have been getting more work in practice, as you know. As they get better and better, they earn the trust of the coaching staff. Robert Longerbeam is being played a lot. Robert has worked his way into being a guy that can play for us.

It's good, we're developing some depth as we go. The offensive line, we have to continue to do that. I think we're ready to play some more guys. We need to make sure that we play and use every bit of talent we have.

Q. The offensive line, seems like you're mixing and matching at left tackle. Noah seemed like he was under duress for a good portion of the game. Do you still need to mix and match up there?

GREG SCHIANO: You don't mix and match because it's all good, right? We're mixing and matching to try to find a combination that can get the job done.

When you have guys that are of like ability, perform similarly in practice and games, you play them both. You hope that someone is going to take off and go.

I think Hollin Pierce is becoming more and more of a consistent guy. He's playing darn near every play. We need more guys to just develop. We need to coach 'em to develop 'em. They're not going to develop on their own.

I think Coach Aurich is doing a great job developing. You all want it to happen faster, all of us. But it's not an easy position to learn, to become an expert at. We just have to keep working at it.

Q. TyQuan, did that happen this morning, last night? Was it expected or kind of sudden?

GREG SCHIANO: No, it happened a little earlier in the week. Wasn't really sure what the situation was going to require. I'm always going to put our player's safety and staff safety first. All that stuff, these are somebody's kids. These are somebody's parents, right? Somebody's husband. I look at it that way. If we're going to err, we're going to err on the side of caution.

I expect Ty hopefully to be back with us soon. Again, people are... That's what you do. That's what we do. You just keep going. Figure out the next step. Some guys stepped up today. Andrew, a graduate assistant, stepped up, did a great job. That's what we need.

Q. At the end of the first half, did you go into that scenario knowing you were going to fake the third timeout?

GREG SCHIANO: It's more of a feel thing. I've been doing this a long time. You get kind of a feel. You can think back to some other games, but you know the reality is sometimes you burn a timeout and the guy misses it when you call the timeout. You call it the last minute, he misses it. I shouldn't have called the timeout.

There's no science to it, you just go with your gut. You can't take 'em with you. They go away at the half. We decided to use two of the three. It's not a science.

Guys, I appreciate it. Hopefully we'll get to see some of you guys out in Chicago. Thanks.

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