

Rutgers University Football Media Conference

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Piscataway, New Jersey, USA

Greg Schiano

Postgame Press Conference



Nebraska 14, Rutgers 13

GREG SCHIANO: Try to help you any way I can tonight. Thanks for sticking around.

Q. Up 13, is there a point they started to take back momentum and things really changed?

GREG SCHIANO: You know they get a score. I thought they battled.

Is there a point where it just turned? No. We didn't -- we didn't take advantage of opportunities in the first half. And I've been doing this a long time and when you do that, sometimes you get away with it but more times than not, you don't -- more times than not, it comes and bites you in the rear end in the game, and it sure did us.

There was an opportunity in this game to have it three scores or more at the half and we can't do it.

Q. Can you help us better understand the quarterback situation? It appeared that when Noah started, he threw a couple nice passes but then he left the game, but came back and threw more. Was he healthy enough to play?

GREG SCHIANO: Here is the situation with our quarterbacks. It's been unfortunate. Everybody knows now, so I'll announce: Noah has a hand injury, and he has healed, right. He had it repaired and he has healed. But he has stamina. His stamina isn't what he needs to be yet. So he's not in danger of hurting himself worse.

But he can't always grip the ball the way he wants to and when he can sometimes, then it comes and goes. And part of it is fatigue, muscle fatigue. You know, his hand was in a cast, or whatever that thing he had on for quite some time and takes a little too to get it back. So he has fought his guts out to get back.

He's just not all the way back yet. Gavin, he actually has an injury that if he played tonight, would he have risked

hurting himself worse. So we are never going to do that. He's getting better.

And then Evan, Evan is the most healthy but certainly he's been banged up as well.

So yeah, it's unfortunate, the quarterback situation the way it is. It's not the way you want it as a head coach for sure, but you don't get to pick that.

Q. What determines how you utilize the quarterbacks who are healthy and available?

GREG SCHIANO: Noah was the most healthy he's been. So when he's the most healthy, he's the most experienced. He's the guy that needs to play right now. But he can't do it a whole game, and you could see, some of those passes got away from him. And it's frustrating for him because you know he's used to being able to do that and now sometimes he can and sometimes he can't.

So there were some nice passes early. Evan has done some good things and when you look back over the course of the season, he's been able to have some completions and some plays and you know, turn the ball over, you can't do that. That's, I mean, we're a good team when we don't turn it over.

Q. You guys are in the bottom ten in most offensive categories. Do you have confidence that you can turn this offense around, and if so, why?

GREG SCHIANO: I most definitely do. We have a lot of work to do. This bye week we are going to have to really examine everything we are doing, why we are doing it and who is doing it and when they are doing it. That's going to take some time. But you know what, we have the bye week to do it. We have a lot of football ahead of us.

When you're feel -- I have felt, even in the Ohio State game, I feel like we are competitively playing, right, and that's a step along the way to becoming winning more than you lose.

It's not a step that we much enjoy, but it's a step. You throw in some injuries, it makes it harder, especially at the



quarterback position. But you can't pick the hand you're dealt. You have to play it. So if you have the 5 of Clubs, you have to figure out how to win with the 5 of Clubs. That's life.

Q. Rutgers had nine penalties that cost the team 97 yards. What can you say about the effect of these penalties on the team's chances of winning?

GREG SCHIANO: It's hard to win when you have nine penalties, there's no doubt about it. That's my job. I've got to make sure that we play penalty-clean football. We have, at times. Especially other times, other years, or just this year we seem to be making mistakes are costly. That's the way it goes.

Q. Nebraska's defense in the second half compared to the first half where it seems like everything was clicking in the first half and did a complete 180 in the second half.

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, see, I didn't feel like everything was clicking in the first half. That's where we differ, right. I think we had some opportunities.

We had one drive where everything was clicking, and two -- you know, a big play made the drive go. I did never feel like we were in a rhythm where just we were rolling. And I don't think that has to do with who is running it or who is throwing it or all those things.

It has to do with we need to execute better and we need to coach better. That's what I mean we have to examine what we are doing. What are doing, how we are doing, who we are doing it with, and certainly, something is not working. The other side of the ball, I think they are playing very well. Playing winning football. So we need to get it straightened out. We block a punt and we come away with three points. No. 1, you have to scoop and score the punt. We work on it all the time. We didn't execute it. Maybe we're -- I don't know, we have to figure out why it's not happening. Maybe we have to do a better job coaching it but then we only get a field goal out of that.

Those are the things that get you. That's what I'm talking about when I say missed opportunities.

Q. What did you sense was the mod of the players in the locker room after and going into the bye week, are there things that you have to do to maybe in terms of the energy level, get guys pumped up?

GREG SCHIANO: No. This team has a very strong culture. We have a very, very tight football team. I told them, though, I said the doubters will be out there; the

people telling you, you're not enough and you're not going to win games and all those things, and that will happen. You can't allow circumstance to dictate your behavior, and if you do, you're on for a wild ride. You have to believe in your culture and you have to live it. Whether you win 14-13 or you lose 14-13, still, you have to be the same person. And that, I believe, we will be, I do. I believe we have that strength of culture in our locker room. They are very disappointed to the point of grown men crying because they felt and they know we let one slip away today.

But I don't -- I say that and I don't say that, right. Because when I'm on that other side, we won that game. If I'm Nebraska, we won' it. We didn't let it slip away. We took it.

And that's what I've been telling the team. We are in that area now where we have a chance to win but you've got to take it. That's a learned skill just like everything else.

Q. What could you want to say to the fans who have not seen a Big Ten home win in five years?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, it's tough. I agree. Two and a half of them are obviously when I was here. We've had some really good, competitive home games. We've had some not-so-good ones.

But I think it's good, competitive Big Ten football, and it has to turn into really good winning Big Ten football. But as I said, you know, the whole time, I know everybody, we did some things and people got expectations but this is the way it's going to go when you build a program (indicating ups and downs). It's not going to go like that (indicating ascending straight up) we'll get there. And I know our fans believe. They are frustrated as I am frustrated but I know they believe.

Q. You mentioned how well the defense played, does that add frustration to this because knowing what it could be if the offense got it figured out, or is it more offense if the offense figure it is out things can go in the right direction?

GREG SCHIANO: A little of both. Certainly it's frustrating when you are playing well enough on one or two of the phases and not on the other. But it's a team sport. It's the ultimate team sport and right now as the head coach I need to figure out with our staff to get that part of the team playing better, and to continue have the other two phases get better and better as we go.

The biggest thing we need to do is we need to get better. That sounds very cliché but we are not good enough to win these games yet. I'm not good enough; our team isn't

good enough; our staff isn't good enough. We need to get better.

Q. The fourth quarter timeouts, the back-to-back time-outs, what was happening there?

GREG SCHIANO: That was a substitution error. That was certainly not something I was very pleased with but sometimes that does happen. You know, there's a lot of emotion going on. I think, again, if you saw, there was guys out there, Carnell Davis is playing, there was several changes, there was some injuries there, we lost Desmond Igbinosun, and then we lost Max Melton, and there was a lot of guys, and we weren't really sure what they were going to do. You know, because it was, are they going to throw it and end the game. They get a first down and the game is over or are they going to run it? All those things, and we are in and out of different packages throughout the timeout, and one of the guys just didn't hear it and that's on us. We have to make sure they hear it.

So wasn't going to let it get a first down. We had one to use. I used it. I'm not real happy about that.

I do believe, I do believe that these kids will stick together. I do believe that they are going to work their tails off and you know, we're going to get better as a team. I'm confident of that, so, thanks.

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