

Rutgers University Football Media Conference

Saturday, September 9, 2023

Piscataway, New Jersey, USA

Greg Schiano

Postgame Press Conference



Rutgers 36, Temple 7

GREG SCHIANO: Good to get a W, 1-0 in that Temple season, what we set out to do, very pleased with that. A lot of things we have to get better at and a lot of things we have to work on but I thought there was a lot of good, too, that happened tonight.

With that, I'll kind of open it up to questions.

Q. How did you think the team responded after Temple scored early in the fourth quarter?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, it was a weird night. I feel like there were several times in the first half that we could have blown the game wide open and for whatever reasons, it didn't happen. Then we hit some adversity, and I thought that's an improvement. That thing could have gotten away. It could have slide down and really been a nail-biter, and instead they said no, this is what's going to happen. Took the ball away twice.

Had a good drive. Answered the bell with whatever it was, 23 points after that score.

So yeah, that's a positive for sure. Proud of them.

Q. Can you tell us what happened with the unsportsmanlike call and was any part of that trying to fire up your own team?

GREG SCHIANO: I don't remember that. What was -- what was that about?

Q. Got flagged?

GREG SCHIANO: I did?

Q. I thought was you.

GREG SCHIANO: No, it was me. (Laughter) Yeah, I'm not real proud of that. I said to my son, "Have I ever had one of those before?"

He goes, "Yeah, Dad, last year at Ohio State." That's different. I was protecting my player on that one. Yeah, I'm not very proud of that. That's losing -- that's not good. I could disagree with officials but that doesn't mean I can go on the field. That's not what you're allowed to do. It's not right. I'm going to have to pay my pen answer on that one.

Q. What did you see in the summer and even prior to the game tonight that indicated Jai Patel could have the night that he did?

GREG SCHIANO: You know, it was really in the spring. He won the job in the spring. He was very consistent in the spring and then in the summer just continued to do that. Coming out of spring, he was the one, and he just kept doing it and same thing in training camp.

So you know, he and Jude have a great relationship. They work together. Jude has a really strong leg and so you know, we may use him in that role, too. I was thrilled tonight with both those guys. I mean, 3-for-3 on field goals, 51-yarder and then Jude knocked every one of them out, touch back. That's pretty good.

And then I think Flynn is really starting to get his feel. Replacing some big shoes to fill and he's done a good job, pleased.

Mike did a good job tonight on snaps, long snaps. He did a good job, and Jake snapping short snaps. I think we have a bunch of new specialists that are stepping up, which is good.

Q. What did you think about Gavin tonight?

GREG SCHIANO: I think he performed very efficiently. No turnovers two weeks in a row. Threw the ball; I mean, the one ball he threw to JaQuae Jackson was beautiful. He had another three on the deep over that got called back on the holding penalty. There were some really nice balls.

At the end of the halftime, we told you, any question, throw it out of bounds. We're not going to get anything silly here. I thought he managed the game right. He played well. He



took some hits, which I hope he's going to be okay tomorrow. I think he is.

But he's been sacked one time, which is a tribute to the line as well as him, knowing where to go with the football and getting it out of his hands. Overall, I think another step in the right direction.

Q. Two interceptions, about a dozen passes deflected. What can you say how well your defense played tonight especially against the half?

GREG SCHIANO: You know, what you have with Warner is a guy that gets rid of the ball faster than anybody in America. Last week they got rid of it in 2.1 on average. So the thing that we kept talking to our D-Line is do not get frustrated. You're not going to get to him very much because he just gets rid of it so fast.

But what we did talk about doing was getting our hands up and affecting the path of the ball, and we had 13 PVU, some with D-line, some with the linebackers and some with the secondary. But that's what you have to do when a team works a lot of short, quick passing game.

The thing that was a little discouraging is we tripped once, we got picked once on some big pass plays that generally that doesn't happen. We have to look at that and say, okay, why are we tripping; we did we get picked. Was it a lack of awareness, technique, what it was, or was it just eye control. He'll take a look at that and figure it out.

Q. Kyle Monangai, 28 carries, 165 yards, career-high performance. What did you see from how he performed and how that helped the running game overall?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, he ran tough and he ran tough last week as well. I want to make sure that we get everybody experience because in this league, you need multiple backs. This is a tough, tough, tough, league. So I think we are doing that.

We got Sam back. Got him a couple touches, even Salaam we got a couple.

Aaron Young, I think will be good to go this coming week. He may have been able to go today but you know, not going to risk it with when we have healthy guys. But you sure are right that he led the team. I mean, that's a heck of a rushing day and they were tough yards, too. I mean, he really ran hard.

Q. Looked like Tyler had a pretty bad injury. Do you have an update on his status?

GREG SCHIANO: We'll know more, I'll probably be able to tell you more on Monday but yeah, we are concerned about Ty.

Q. Throughout the game it looked like they came out in a couple one-shell and they stacked the box a lot. A lot of coaches, an opportunity to try to blow the top off or take some opportunities on outside. Looked like you stayed true to the run game. Was that attempting to send a message or trying to stay true to the game plan?

GREG SCHIANO: Not really into sending messages. If it was a message to anybody, it was to our team that, you know, sometimes there's going to be an extra guy and that's yours. When I'm talking yours, I mean, the backs. Block everybody else and then you take them on and you either run them over or you make them mess. We did that a few times and sometimes we didn't.

I thought some of the pass game, some of the playaction stuff, we were inches away from having a huge night. But that's something that we'll work on for sure.

Q. The Rutgers defense calls themselves the dark side defense. What can you say about the defensive play as a whole this season so far and just their connection as a group?

GREG SCHIANO: I think they are playing well. I think there's still a lot more that they can do. I think they are just scratching the surface, but I think they are playing well. I think they have a great bond. I think the defensive staff has a great bond. I think the defensive players have a great bond with the staff and with each other. It's neat to watch. I enjoy being around them.

Q. Kyle Monangai, one of the first players you offered when you returned here. What did you see from him early on in the process and the maturation over the past couple years, especially when things have gotten difficult, he's kind of stuck around.

GREG SCHIANO: Well, I didn't really know for sure, you never know for sure but I asked his high school coach and Chris told me. He said, "I'm telling you, Coach, I'll stand on the table for this guy," and I trust his opinion.

We took him on that. Because a lot of people told me don't: He's too small; he can't do it. When his own high school coach talked with the certainty that he did; I've known him for a long time, he's a heck of a coach. So when he said it, I said, okay, I'm going to trust you on this one. He was right.

Q. Dixon came up with some big plays. How big was it to get someone of his experience level, and where he's been in the past to add to your defense and fill a need there?

GREG SCHIANO: Flip Dixon's done a great job for us. He's a man out there. He's no young kid. That's a grown man out there. When he tackle, you know it. He plays with great poise. He's a huge addition for us.

Q. You had a couple games last year where it was a one-score game in the fourth quarter and stayed a one-score game in the fourth quarter, including this game against Temple. Have you learned something about your team's resolve overall with the way it performed down tonight?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, I guess it's resolve. I think the better -- I don't know if a better word, but what they were able to do was hit reset and stop going down that slope and just get back to doing what we do. That's, you know, we talk about chopping the moment. Whatever moment you're in, you've just got to chop that moment, and we weren't doing that. We were kind chasing the game. I was chasing the game. The team was chasing a game. Not a very good job by an experienced coach when you chase the game like that.

I was really proud we got together as a team going into that fourth quarter, and we decided, hey, enough, let's go play the way we are playing and coaching the way we're capable of coaching. Some nights it's like that. Some nights, you feel you're half a step forward and half a step back, and all of the sudden just, boom, so I was pleased.

Q. With Sam Brown coming back, scoring a touchdown, how good to have him back and see him in the field again and Chris Long couldn't go, could you clarify?

GREG SCHIANO: It was great to have Sam back. He's got to work himself back into shape, into game shape and I don't mean cardiovascular I mean carrying the football, getting hit, all those things. I'm anxious to watch that happen because he's a fine player.

Chris Long, unfortunately, could not play. He was out with an injury. I don't know how long he's going to be out. That's still up in the air. I thought that so far, we've been able to, you know, like JaQuae Jackson, he was coming back from a little something so he came back, and performed at a high, high level. So far we have been able to fill in the spots. I think Drummer went down, so I'm concerned about him, too. It was a physical game.

Couple things that I thought I'd bring up with you is JaQuae Jackson, the performance that he had tonight, I've seen that coming but you guys have not been able to see that coming because he missed some of camp. But I was really pleased with him. I think that that was something we needed. That was a shot in the arm we needed.

I also want to talk about our student section. That was really cool. They got there early. They were cheering their classmates on early before any -- while we were warming up. When we got that delay of game, when Temple got the delay of game, that was totally home-field advantage. Our student section, I couldn't hear a thing. The guy was yelling in my ear and I couldn't hear; that's how loud it was. That's huge for us.

So I want to thank them. And they looked great, all dressed in black for the blackout. That's college football right there.

We've just got to keep doing it. Keep giving them a reason to come and they will do a great job for us, I know that, so I want to thank them. Appreciate you guys sticking around, covering us. Thanks.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...