

Rutgers University Football Media Conference

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Greg Schiano

Press Conference

GREG SCHIANO: Thanks for coming out. Had a really good-bye week, the guys needed that, and last night we turned our attention to Virginia Tech.

Got started on them, and huge task. First time on the road, I love that. It will be a great environment. The players that we face on the road, this is a veteran team that as I look at them, they probably have eight to ten -first-round picks on this team and probably another five to seven free agents. They have a lot of NFL players. A lot of teams have a lot of NFL players playing on their team, and they are one of them.

It starts with the quarterback. No. 1, Drones. He is really big, athletic, strong arm. Can create; can throw from the pocket; can run the ball. We saw him a little last year, and I think from our game on, I guess we knocked out the quarterback and he came in, and their ascension as a program as a team kind of coincided with his development. Really, a fine player.

33, Tuten, the running back, is a really good player. Low to the ground. Physical, patient runner. Very, very physical runner.

And then their receiving core, this may be the best receiving core we go against all year. I don't know, but it will be up there in the top three for sure. 83, Lane, is fast, athletic. He's a day one or two pick. He's that good.

But you know, Jennings and Felton aren't far behind. We actually went down and spoke with Jennings when he was thinking about transferring. So we flew down there and visited with him. Didn't work out, obviously. But I think he's a really good player.

I think their tight end, who I think is just a red shirt sophomore, Gomez, he's a good player, too. Whenever you look in the skill game, they are loaded. When you flip over to defense, 62, APR, that's what they call him, he is an electric player. He had four sacks last game, sack fumble. You've really got to know where he is.



But I think their secondary is really good. Their corners, both NFL players, and because of that, they are afforded a lot of flexibility defensively what they can do.

So they can play man. They can play zone. They can sack the box. They can outnumber you, and they do all that.

Coach Frye is an excellent football coach. He's put together a really good staff. I knew him when he was at Penn State, and obviously he's the right man for that job. He's home in Virginia, and he's doing a great job with the program.

It will be quite a challenge, and one I'm looking forward to and I know the guys are as well. Great atmosphere, great team and opponent that is really going to test us, and looking forward to decompress it.

So with that, I'll open it up for yes.

Q. You mentioned the quarterback. When you watched him on film, did anything jump out at you about how much he's improved in the last year?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, you can see his ascension, right. Like they said, I watched last year's tape and you see him getting better and better and better, and then this year, you know, he is elect attribute. Like he can create things. There's one play where the ball is on the ground and next thing you know, it's a huge gain. He scoops it up, scrambles, throws it downfield, and I believe that one was to Lane.

When you have that kind of speed and you have that kind of athleticism, you've really got to be on point. Otherwise, you make one misstep, and it's a touchdown.

Q. What do you remember about that last game when Rutgers played there, and what it was like to play as a visitor there?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, it's a long time ago. I think I was 35 years old, 35, 36.

I remember we battled. They were a much better team,



but we battled and we hit some -- I remember Aaron Martin had some big catches in that game. Yeah, certainly not good enough to win. Great place to play. It's expanded since then.

It is one of the better venues and looking forward to it. But again, the team we have to play, that's the thing. The road is the road. But the level of talent that you face, that's the challenge.

Q. Do you still feel as banged up as you were in preseason and the first couple weeks?

GREG SCHIANO: That's a good question. We were better than we were going into the season. We are still not back but we are better. Certainly with Mo gone, he's not going to be back. So that's a huge hit.

But we're getting there. So I'm not going to get into the availability and who going to play and who is not going to play and all that stuff because quite frankly some of it, I'm not sure.

And the ones I am sure, I'm not going to talk about because we need every advantage we can go there this week.

Q. Philosophically, how do you approach the bye week in terms of keeping the guys sharp, but since you've come back, but coming into week three with a bye?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, it's different when you do it after two weeks.

I kind of looked at training camp and our first two games as that chunk. You know, when you get into the season, it's different. The next time we have a bye, we'll have played six straight games. So it is different.

Just as I approach training camp, the guys that are, you know, those 750- or 1,000-rep plus guys, it's going to be a long season. We got done what we needed to get done, and now doing other things, lifting, treatment, those kind of things. Guys that are trying to work their way back, we are trying to get an opportunity to get them reps that they needed. And the young guys, they got 100-game-like reps last week, so it's huge for their development.

We do developmental football all season long. That's who we are, we are a developmental program. All our guys, our red shirt guys, we go a little extra to get the repetitions. But weeks like that, we really give them a big chunk.

And then we were able to go through -- which we were not

able to after the first game, we played on a Thursday and we were not allowed to go out because you couldn't go out until the 1st of September.

So we missed out on that weekend, but we mobilized at a staff. I was in several places, and we'll do that usually on every bye week. So philosophically, that's kind of the approach. Where it falls in the year determines how or what you do.

We do have some experienced players, though and I wasn't just going to have them run into each other for another week without a game to prepare for.

Q. What's your evaluation of the pass rush so far this season?

GREG SCHIANO: Pass rush, I kind of group it together with last season, which wasn't good enough, and then this season is slightly improved, but we have to make substantial improvement, and this week we are going to get the maximum test.

I'll tell you the truth. That first, against Howard, that kid was as mobile and as fast as I've seen. I don't think Drones is quite as fast as he is, but Drones is 200 -- they list him at 230 something, but he looks every bit of 240.

So think about a quarterback when he scrambles and you've got to tackle a 240-pound man that moves, you know, in both their games, he ran through people's tackles. And the guy he hands it off to, Tuten, he is really physical, as well.

This is going to be a physical game on the road, and you know, you'd better pack your toughness, that's for sure.

Q. Rutgers is ranked near the top in terms of returning freshmen last year. Does that change your preparation and game planning?

GREG SCHIANO: You know, we played each other. I think both teams were quite different back then. We played each other early. We were both trying to figure out -- we were coming off a 4-8 season.

I think it's a little different now. I know they are much more developed and their quarterback situation has become crystallized over the course of last season. If you remember going into last game it was talk about who was going to play and the guy was injured and Jones was challenging him, anyway and there was a lot of conversation.

That's all not the case now. They have their guy. They



have skill people, like I said, that are NFL players. So we have our hands full for sure. And we're going to go down and just kind of do the best we can and see where the chips fall.

All right, guys, like I said, I appreciate you covering us, and we'll see you down in Blacksburg.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...

Q. Last year before you faced Iowa, you and Kirk Ferentz were friends, you said what he did to Iowa is what you would like to do at Rutgers. Along that line, do you view what Coach Beamer did at Virginia Tech as a blueprint for what you do at Rutgers?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, Coach Beamer certainly did an unbelievable job in his time at Virginia Tech. I didn't know I can't tech. He put them on the map in college football. Certainly, if you can duplicate that, they played for a National Championship. Yeah, that would be a great path to follow.

You can't say that I was ever real coach with Coach Beamer, but I'll tell you this. As we're getting ready for the game, I remember I was a 35-year-old head coach sitting at the league meetings with, you know, some of the elite coaches in the country, and Coach Beamer was always very kind. You could tell that a young coach was a little bit uneasy about the situation, and Coach Beamer would always pull you aside and kind of give you a little, Hey, just be careful with this; this is going to come up in the meeting. I always appreciated that.

I try to do that with young coaches now. Because when you're in there, you don't know what to expect. One minute, you're coaching a defense and making sure the guys are all lined up and not worry about all that other stuff and now you are sitting in a meeting and making decision that is affect college football that affect your program.

So he was helpful in that way and I calls think about that. He didn't have to do that, and he did. So I'm appreciative.

Q. Speaking of leadership, Ryan Pisarri has been in the interim athletic director role for about a month now. What's been your experience with him and what kind of job do you think he's done so far?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, Ryan, you may or may not know, was our football administrator all along since I came back. He's done a great job for us in the five years we've been back. When I took over, he stepped in and has done a very good job. Certainly he's a guy that wants to work, wants to get it done and wants to make sure that he's doing everything that he can to help our program and all the athletics programs here at Rutgers.

So yeah, I'm pleased with everything he's done, and really, it's been seamless. Yeah.

